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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Report on the fourteenth session

(Geneva, 6-24 January 1997)

CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
I.	ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS	1 - 14	3
	A. States parties to the Convention	1 - 2	3
	B. Opening and duration of the session	3	3
	C. Membership and attendance	4 - 8	3
	D. Agenda	9	4
	E. Pre-sessional working group	10 - 12	4
	F. Organization of work	13	5
	G. Future regular meetings	14	5
II.	REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION	15 - 247	5
	A. Submission of reports	15 - 19	5
	B. Consideration of reports	20 - 247	6
	Concluding observations: Bulgaria	25 - 59	7
	Concluding observations: Ethiopia	60 - 97	12
	Concluding observations: Panama	98 - 134	19
	Concluding observations: Myanmar	135 - 182	25

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	Concluding observations: Syrian Arab Republic	183 - 214	32
	Concluding observations: New Zealand	215 - 247	38
III.	OVERVIEW OF THE OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE	248 - 287	42
	A. Informal meeting	248 - 259	42
	B. Review of developments relevant to the work of the Committee	260 - 263	45
	C. Cooperation with United Nations and other competent bodies	264 - 285	46
	D. Future thematic debate	286 - 287	50
IV.	DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTEENTH SESSION	288	50
V.	ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	289	50

Annexes

I.	States which have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as at 24 January 1997	51
II.	Membership of the Committee on the Rights of the Child	57
III.	Status of submission of reports by States parties under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as at 24 January 1997	58
IV.	Overview of the important steps taken in the field of the rights of the child	69
V.	Bureau of the Committee on the Rights of the Child Third Activity report starting from 22 May 1995	74
VI.	List of initial reports considered by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as at 24 January 1997	80
VII.	Provisional list of initial reports scheduled for consideration at the Committee's fifteenth and sixteenth sessions	83
VIII.	List of documents issued for the fourteenth session of the Committee	84

I. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

A. States parties to the Convention

1. As at 24 January 1997, the closing date of the fourteenth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there were 189 States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 and opened for signature and ratification or accession in New York on 26 January 1990. It entered into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with the provisions of its article 49. A list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention is contained in annex I to the present report.

2. The texts of the declarations, reservations or objections made by States parties with respect to the Convention are reproduced in document CRC/C/2/Rev.5.

B. Opening and duration of the session

3. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its fourteenth session at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 6 to 24 January 1997. The Committee held 28 meetings (344th-371st). An account of the Committee's deliberations at its fourteenth session is contained in the relevant summary records (CRC/C/SR.344-365 and 371). At the opening of the session, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, addressed the Committee, and informed it of recent developments relevant to the protection and promotion of the rights of the child.

C. Membership and attendance

4. All the members of the Committee attended the fourteenth session. A list of the members, together with an indication of the duration of their terms of office, is provided in annex II to the present report.

5. The following United Nations bodies were represented at the session: United Nations Children's Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

6. The following specialized agencies were also represented at the session: International Labour Organization, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

7. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the Institut Henri Dunant also attended the session.

8. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations were also in attendance at the session:

General Consultative Status

International Abolitionist Federation, International Council of Women, International Movement ATD Fourth World, World Conference on Religion and Peace, Zonta International.

Special consultative status

Association for the Advancement of Psychological Understanding of Human Nature, Caritas Internationalis, Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Defence for Children International, Human Rights Watch, International Catholic Child Bureau, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Service for Human Rights, World View International.

Roster

World Organization against Torture.

Others

Epoch Worldwide, International Inner Wheel, Network for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, One World Productions.

D. Agenda

9. At its 344th meeting, on 6 January 1997, the Committee adopted the following provisional agenda.

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Organizational and other matters.

3. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with article 44 of the Convention.

4. Consideration of reports of States parties.

5. Review of developments relevant to the work of the Committee.

6. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.

7. Methods of work of the Committee.

8. Future meetings of the Committee.

9. Other matters.

E. Pre-sessional working group

10. In accordance with a decision of the Committee at its first session, a pre-sessional working group met in Geneva from 14 to 18 October 1996. Mrs. Hoda Badran, Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mrs. Flora Eufemio, Mrs. Judith Karp, Mr. Yuri Kolosov and Miss Sandra Mason participated in the working group. Representatives of the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization and the World Health Organization also participated in the meetings of the working group. A representative of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as representatives from various national and international non-governmental organizations, attended the session.

11. The purpose of the pre-sessional working group is to facilitate the Committee's work under articles 44 and 45 of the Convention, primarily by reviewing State party reports and identifying in advance the main questions that would need to be discussed with the representatives of the reporting States. It also provides an opportunity to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation.

12. The pre-sessional working group held nine meetings, at which it examined lists of issues put before it by members of the Committee relating to the initial reports of five countries: Bulgaria, Cuba, New Zealand, Panama and the Syrian Arab Republic. The lists of issues were transmitted to the Permanent Missions of the States concerned with a note requesting written answers to the issues raised in the list, if possible before 10 December 1996.

F. Organization of work

13. The Committee considered the organization of work at its 344th meeting, on 6 January 1997. The Committee had before it the draft programme of work for the thirteenth session, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, and the report of the Committee on its thirteenth session (CRC/C/57).

G. Future regular meetings

14. The Committee noted that its fifteenth session would take place from 20 May to 6 June 1997 and its pre-sessional working group would meet from 27 to 31 January 1997.

II. REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

A. Submission of reports

15. The Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Notes by the Secretary-General on initial reports by States parties due in 1992 (CRC/C/3), 1993 (CRC/C/8/Rev.3), 1994 (CRC/C/11/Rev.3), 1995 (CRC/C/28), 1996 (CRC/C/41), 1997 (CRC/C/51) and 1998 (CRC/C/61);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports (CRC/C/60);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the consideration of initial reports by States parties to the Convention (CRC/C/27/Rev.7);

(d) Note by the Secretary-General on areas in which the need for technical advice and advisory services have been identified in the light of the observations adopted by the Committee (CRC/C/40/Rev.5).

The Committee was informed that, in addition to the six reports that were scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its present session (see para. 21 below) and those which had been received prior to the Committee's twelfth session (see CRC/C/57, para. 16), the Secretary-General had received the initial reports of Belize (CRC/C/3/Add.46), Benin (CRC/C/3/Add.51), Chad (CRC/C/3/Add.49), Guinea (CRC/C/3/Add.48), Saint Kitts and Nevis (CRC/C/3/Add.50). The status of submission of reports by States parties under article 44 of the Convention is given in annex III.

16. A list of initial reports considered by the Committee, as of 24 January 1997 as well as a provisional list of initial reports scheduled for consideration at the Committee's fifteenth and sixteenth sessions, are contained respectively in annexes IV and V to the present report.

17. As at 24 January 1997 the Committee had received 100 initial reports. A total of 68 reports have been examined by the Committee.

18. By a note verbale dated 8 November 1996, the Permanent Mission of Paraguay transmitted the additional information which had been requested in the preliminary observations (CRC/C/15/Add.27) adopted by the Committee at its seventh session in connection with the initial report of Paraguay (CRC/C/3/Add.17).

19. By notes verbales dated 22 November 1996, the Permanent Missions of Uruguay and Morocco to the United Nations Office at Geneva indicated the various measures adopted in those States parties as a follow-up to the recommendations addressed to them during the examination of their initial reports.

B. Consideration of reports

20. At its fourteenth session, the Committee examined initial reports submitted by six States parties under article 44 of the Convention. It devoted 19 of its 28 meetings to the consideration of reports (see CRC/C/SR.345-347, 349-351 and 353-365).

21. The following reports, listed in the order in which they were received by the Secretary-General, were before the Committee at its fourteenth session: Myanmar (CRC/C/8/Add.9), Ethiopia (CRC/C/8/Add.27), Panama (CRC/C/8/Add.28), Bulgaria (CRC/C/8/Add.29), Syrian Arab Republic (CRC/C/28/Add.2) and New Zealand (CRC/C/28/Add.3).

22. In accordance with rule 68 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Committee, representatives of all the reporting States were invited to attend the meetings of the Committee at which their reports were examined.

23. The following sections, arranged on a country-by-country basis according to the sequence followed by the Committee in its consideration of the reports,

contain concluding observations reflecting the main points of discussion and indicating, where necessary, issues that require specific follow-up.

24. More detailed information is contained in the reports submitted by the States parties and in the summary records of the relevant meetings of the Committee.

Concluding observations: Bulgaria

25. The Committee considered the initial report of Bulgaria (CRC/C/8/Add.29) at its 345th to 347th meetings (CRC/C/SR.345-347), held on 7 and 8 January 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

26. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the Government of Bulgaria for engaging, through its delegation, in an open, constructive and fruitful dialogue. It also welcomes the submission of detailed additional information provided to the Committee in a written form. The Committee is encouraged by the frank and cooperative tone of the discussion, in which the representatives of the State party indicated not only the policy and programme directions, but also the difficulties encountered in implementing the Convention in practice.

B. Positive aspects

27. The Committee notes with appreciation the important efforts undertaken by the Government in the field of law reform, including the adoption of a new Constitution (1991), the Social Welfare Act (1991), the National Education Act (1992), the Law on Care Centres for Homeless Children (1995), and the amendments to the Penal Code (1995) and to the recent Law for Combating and Preventing Juvenile Justice Delinquency (1996).

28. The Committee welcomes the fact that according to the Constitution international instruments ratified by Bulgaria are part of the country's domestic law and enjoy superiority over norms of domestic law that contradict them.

29. The Committee welcomes the establishment in 1995 of the Youth and Children Committee.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

30. The Committee recognizes the difficulties faced by the State party in the present period of transition to a market-oriented economy which has had a very serious impact on the population, in particular on all vulnerable groups, including children, and has led to increased rates of unemployment and poverty.

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

D. Principal subjects of concern

31. The Committee is concerned that national laws and regulations are not fully consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee is also concerned that a law on the protection of the child has not yet been finalized and adopted.

32. While welcoming the existence of government bodies competent to deal with the welfare of children at the national and local levels, the Committee expresses its concern that there is insufficient coordination among them to develop a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Convention.

33. The Committee is concerned at the lack of an integrated strategy on children as well as of a systematic mechanism to monitor progress in all areas covered by the Convention, and in relation to all groups of children in urban and rural areas, especially those affected by the consequences of the economic transition. The Committee is also concerned about the need to strengthen the State party's capacity to collect and process data to evaluate progress achieved and to assess the impact of policies adopted on children, in particular the most vulnerable groups of children.

34. While encouraged by the existence of national debate, the Committee is worried at the lack of an independent body to monitor observance of human rights, particularly the rights of the child.

35. With regard to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern the inadequacy of measures taken and the insufficient capacity of existing bodies, including the Youth and Children Committee, to ensure the implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources. The Committee is particularly concerned at the insufficient policies, measures and programmes for the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable children, especially children living in poverty, children born out of wedlock, abandoned children, disabled children, children who are victims of abuse, children belonging to minority groups, especially Roma, and children who, in order to survive, are living and/or working in the streets.

36. The Committee is concerned that the general principles of the Convention, as laid down in its articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (best interests of the child) and 12 (respect of the views of the child), are not being fully applied and duly integrated into the implementation of all articles of the Convention. Particular concern is expressed at the insufficiency of measures to prevent and combat discrimination practised against Roma children, disabled children and children born out of wedlock. Of equal concern to the Committee is the insufficient consideration of the principle of the best interests of the child in tackling situations of detention, institutionalization and abandonment of children, as well as in relation to the right of the child to testify in court.

37. Although aware of the initiatives already undertaken by the authorities, the Committee remains worried about the insufficiency of measures taken to inform and educate all parts of society, adults and children alike, on the provisions and principles of the Convention. Insufficient training provided

to professional groups, such as lawyers, judges, law enforcement personnel, teachers, social workers and civil servants, on the Convention is also a matter of concern.

38. The Committee is also concerned by the reported ill-treatment of children in the family and in institutions and the lack of adequate measures for the psycho-social recovery from such abuses. Cases of ill-treatment of children by law enforcement personnel in or outside detention centres are also a very grave matter of concern, even if they are isolated cases. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned by the recent rise in child prostitution and the production and dissemination of pornographic materials involving children. In this regard, the fact that no specific and appropriate legislation and programmes exist to prevent and combat sexual abuse and exploitation is a serious concern to the Committee.

39. With regard to adoption, despite recent changes in the legislation regulating this practice, the Committee is concerned by the lack of compatibility of the current legal framework with the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to the principle of the best interests of the child (art. 3).

40. The Committee is worried about the insufficient measures taken to tackle the issues of child malnutrition, disability, mental health and early pregnancies, as well as cases of early marriage. It is also concerned about the problem of youth suicide.

41. With regard to the full implementation of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention and despite the existence of international cooperation in this field, the Committee is concerned about the school drop-out rate and the insufficient alternative educational programmes. It is also concerned about the insufficient measures taken to ensure that the school curricula are guided by the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to human rights education.

42. Moreover, the Committee is concerned about the absence of legal safeguards to protect children employed in the informal sector.

43. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice and in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention, as well as other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, is a matter of concern to the Committee. Despite recent legal amendments, the Committee remains particularly worried, inter alia, about the rights of the child to legal assistance and judicial review, that deprivation of liberty is not used only as a measure of last resort, and about the stigmatization of the most vulnerable categories of children, including those belonging to the Roma minority.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

44. The Committee recommends that the Government undertake a comprehensive review of the national legislation to bring it fully into conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially in the areas of

labour, adoption, the administration of juvenile justice and domestic violence. It also strongly recommends that the Government consider, on an urgent basis, the adoption of a law on the protection of the child.

45. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen coordination between the various governmental mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation of the Convention in the country. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its efforts to strengthen the institutional framework designed to promote and protect human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular. It encourages the State party to cooperate closely with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

46. The Committee also recommends that the State party give priority attention to the development of a system of data collection and to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society. Such mechanisms can play a vital role in systematically monitoring the status of children and evaluating progress achieved and the difficulties hampering the realization of children's rights. They can be used as a basis for designing programmes to improve the situation of children, particularly those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, including disabled children, children born out of wedlock, children ill-treated and abused within the family, in institutions, or deprived of liberty, children who are victims of sexual exploitation, children belonging to minority groups, especially Roma, and children who, in order to survive, are forced to live and/or work in the streets. It is further suggested that the State party request international cooperation in this regard.

47. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its consideration on the establishment of an independent mechanism to monitor observance of children's rights, such as an Ombudsperson or a National Commission for Children's Rights.

48. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to take fully into account the principle of the best interests of the child (art. 3) for every decision relating to the child's right to give testimony before a court.

49. The Committee recommends that the State party launch a systematic information campaign, for both children and adults, on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consideration should be given to the incorporation of the Convention in the school curricula and appropriate measures should be taken to facilitate access by children to information produced on their rights. The Committee suggests that the State party develop a comprehensive training programme for professional groups working with and for children such as lawyers, judges, teachers, social workers, medical doctors, law enforcement personnel and personnel in institutions for children. Police officers must be specially trained to deal with child abuse and neglect.

50. The Committee recommends that the State party, in the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, undertake all appropriate measures to

the maximum extent of its available resources to ensure that sufficient budgetary allocation is provided to social services for children and that particular attention is paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the "child impact" of decisions taken by the authorities be assessed on an ongoing basis.

51. The Committee also suggests that appropriate alternatives to institutional care be developed, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration, as well as the promotion of his or her harmonious development and preparation for responsible participation in society. In cases where the placement of children in institutions is necessary, measures should be adopted to ensure periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a system of "guardian ad litem".

52. The Committee also suggests that measures be adopted by the State party to provide appropriate assistance to the family in the performance of its child-rearing responsibilities, including parental guidance and counselling, with a view, inter alia, to preventing domestic violence and abuse, abandonment and institutionalization of children. Research should be promoted in these areas.

53. To prevent early pregnancies, the Committee recommends that sex education be strengthened and that information campaigns be launched concerning family planning. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the Government undertake a national and comprehensive study on suicide among youth to enable the authorities to improve their understanding of this phenomenon and take appropriate measures to reduce the suicide rate.

54. In the light of articles 19, 34 and 37 (a), the Committee strongly recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat corporal punishment, sexual abuse and exploitation and ill-treatment of children, including in institutions and in detention centres. The Committee suggests that corporal punishment be prohibited by civil legislation and that appropriate legal measures be taken to combat sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Cases of abuse should be properly investigated, sanctions applied to perpetrators and publicity given to the decisions taken in those cases. Further measures should be taken with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the victims of abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, violence or exploitation, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention.

55. With regard to adoption, the Committee recommends that appropriate legal and institutional steps be taken to fully harmonize law and procedures, both on national and international levels, with the principles and provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the State party pursue its consideration of the ratification of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

56. In the field of education, the Committee recommends that the State party take appropriate measures to prevent drop-outs and that the current existing programmes to retain children in schools be reinforced. The school curricula should be reviewed to promote respect for the Convention. Vocational training on the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be developed.

57. While welcoming the ratification by the State party of ILO Convention No. 138, the Committee recommends that the State party adopt all necessary legal and other appropriate measures to protect children from economic exploitation through labour, including in the informal sector.

58. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage undertaking a comprehensive reform of the system of juvenile justice in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to the right of children to prompt access to legal assistance and to a judicial review. Training programmes on the relevant international standards should be organized for all professionals involved with the juvenile justice system and specialized courts should be established as a priority matter. The Committee further suggests that the State party consider seeking technical assistance for this purpose from the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations.

59. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies submitted by Bulgaria be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations: Ethiopia

60. The Committee considered the initial report of Ethiopia (CRC/C/8/Add.27) at its 349th to 351st meetings (CRC/C/SR.349-351) held on 9 and 10 January 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

61. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for engaging in an open and constructive dialogue with the Committee. It welcomes the submission of the initial report of Ethiopia, which follows the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of States parties' initial reports, as well as written answers to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/ETH.1), although it notes that a number of the questions asked were not answered. The Committee particularly wishes to express its satisfaction at the self-critical approach of the report

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

in identifying a number of areas of concern, and it welcomes the willingness expressed by the delegation that the suggestions and recommendations made during the discussion would be duly taken into account by the Ethiopian authorities.

B. Positive factors

62. The Committee notes with appreciation the steps taken since 1991 to set up democratic institutions in the country. It welcomes the adoption of a new Constitution, which incorporates international standards in the field of human rights, including, in its article 36, a specific reference to some of the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

63. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the Convention, as well as other international treaties dealing with human rights, are incorporated into domestic law, and that article 13 of the Constitution states that human rights provisions of the Constitution are to be interpreted in line with international human rights instruments ratified by Ethiopia.

64. The Committee also welcomes the political commitment within the country to improve the situation of children, which finds expression notably through the setting up of an Inter-ministerial Legal Committee to review national legislation and its compatibility with the provisions of the Convention, through the establishment of committees on the rights of the child at the national, regional, zonal and woreda levels, as well as through the adoption of a National Plan of Action and the establishment of a ministerial committee to monitor its implementation.

65. The Committee is encouraged by the combined efforts undertaken by the Government and international or non-governmental organizations to protect and promote children's rights, in particular in the field of information on HIV/AIDS and information campaigns on harmful traditional practices affecting children. With regard to the latter, the Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Committee on Traditional Practices to develop information and sensitization campaigns on all forms of harmful traditional practices affecting the health of women and children, with a particular emphasis on female genital mutilation.

66. The Committee notes with appreciation that primary education has been made free, although it regrets that it has not yet been made compulsory.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

67. The Committee acknowledges that the State party has had to face, during the past few years, economic, social and political challenges, due, inter alia, to years of civil war and the transition to democracy. It notes the existence of interregional and urban/rural disparities, in particular with regard to the availability of resources and infrastructure, which may lead to discrimination in the enjoyment of the rights provided for in the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee notes that certain traditional practices and

customs, prevailing particularly in rural areas, hamper the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to the girl child.

D. Principal subjects of concern

68. The Committee notes that, although the notification of the ratification of the Convention by Ethiopia was published in the Official Gazette, the full text of the Convention has to date not been published in the Gazette, thus making it difficult for law enforcement officials, judicial personnel and other professionals working with and for children to have access to and an understanding of its provisions.

69. The Committee also notes that there is a lack of awareness and understanding in the State party of the principles and provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee is concerned at the lack of adequate and systematic training provided to law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, teachers, social workers and medical personnel. The Committee further notes that insufficient attention has been paid in practice as well as in the legislation to the principles of the best interests of the child, respect for the child's views and the child's participation in family, social and school life.

70. The Committee notes with concern the lack of adequate mechanisms for the collection of reliable quantitative and qualitative data on the situation of children throughout the country, which hinders the effective assessment by the authorities of the situation of each and every group of children in all parts of the country, and thus makes the adoption of targeted policies in the field of the protection of the rights of children difficult.

71. The Committee expresses its concern about the negative effects of poverty on the situation of children in Ethiopia, as illustrated by the high levels of infant and under-five mortality rates and malnutrition, and at the low levels of school enrolment, education, immunization coverage and health services in general.

72. The Committee notes with concern the non-compatibility of certain provisions of domestic law with the principles and rights enshrined in the Convention, such as the provision for a different minimum age of marriage between girls (15 years of age) and boys (18 years of age), the provision in the Penal Code for the possibility to sentence children to corporal punishment, the provision in the Civil Code for "light bodily punishment" as an educative measure within the family and the limitation of the right to counsel when the child may be represented by his or her parents or legal guardian during legal proceedings.

73. The Committee remains concerned at prevailing traditional attitudes and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, early marriages and teenage pregnancies, and at the persistence of discriminatory social attitudes against vulnerable groups of children, such as the girl child, disabled children, children born out of wedlock and children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans.

74. The Committee is concerned that insufficient steps have been taken to ensure the registration of children after birth and that the State registration procedure is hampered in practice by the lack of registration desks, especially in rural areas. The Committee also expresses its concern in relation to the lack of adequate means available for the registration of refugee children.

75. The Committee is concerned that, since children are able to lodge complaints only through their parents or legal guardians, the right to adequate recourse and complaint procedures for children victims of abuse, including sexual abuse, neglect or ill-treatment within their families, does not seem to be secured. The Committee is also concerned that the enjoyment by children of their right to participate actively in the promotion of their own rights does not seem to be guaranteed.

76. The Committee is concerned at the low levels of school enrolment and at the high drop-out rates, especially among girls, at the lack of learning and teaching facilities and at the shortage of trained teachers, in particular in rural areas. It shares the concerns expressed in the State party's report that the school curricula are divorced from cultural and social realities, and regrets that they do not yet include a programme of education on human rights and children's rights. Moreover, the Committee expresses the concern, as mentioned above, that primary education has not yet been made compulsory.

77. The Committee expresses the concern that the systems of national and intercountry adoptions are not fully in conformity with the provisions of article 21 of the Convention, in particular article 21 (a), and with the principles of the best interests of the child and respect for his or her views.

78. The Committee is also concerned at the situation of children in especially difficult circumstances, including children living and/or working in the street, and at the incidence of child labour, in particular in the informal sector.

79. The Committee is deeply concerned at the present system of juvenile justice, which is not in conformity with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention. It is particularly concerned about the setting of the age of criminal responsibility at 9 years and that as from the age of 15 years, children are treated as adults. In this regard, the Committee regrets that it was not made clear during the discussion whether the latter means that children above 15 years of age may be sentenced to life imprisonment or detained together with adults. Furthermore, the Committee expresses concern at the possibility, mentioned above, provided for in article 172 of the Penal Code to sentence children to corporal punishment at the sole discretion of the judge, in particular with regard to the "bad or good character" of the child in determining the penalty to be applied to the child, and at the possible limitations of the right to legal counsel.

80. In the light of article 39 of the Convention, the Committee is also concerned at the insufficient measures taken by the authorities for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of war.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

81. The Committee recommends that the full text of the Convention be published in the Official Gazette and that training manuals incorporating the text of the Convention be published for the professional groups working with or for children.

82. The Committee encourages the Government to continue its efforts aimed at promoting awareness and understanding of the principles and provisions of the Convention, in the light of article 42 of the Convention, in particular by ensuring the translation and publication of the text of the Convention in all national languages. Such measures would promote change in persisting negative attitudes towards children, particularly girls, disabled children, children born out of wedlock, children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans, and contribute to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health and well-being of children, such as female genital mutilation, early marriages and teenage pregnancies. Such efforts should be pursued in close cooperation with community and religious leaders and non-governmental organizations, at all levels of the State, i.e. national, regional, zonal and woreda levels, and special emphasis should be placed on the need to coordinate the policies designed to implement the Convention between central and local authorities.

83. The Committee also encourages the State party to provide systematic training on the principles and rights enshrined in the Convention to the professional groups working with and for children, such as law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, personnel in child-care institutions, teachers, social workers and medical personnel, as well as to the personnel entrusted with the task of ensuring data collection in the areas covered by the Convention. Similarly, attention should be given to incorporating the Convention in school curricula, as recommended by the General Assembly in proclaiming the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, and by the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights.

84. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen coordination between the various governmental mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation of the Convention in the country. It further recommends that the setting up of an independent mechanism, such as an Ombudsperson on the Rights of the Child or a Human Rights Commission, to ensure observance of children's rights, be considered.

85. The Committee recommends that the system of data collection be improved at the central and local levels of the State, and that it comprise all the areas covered by the Convention. Such a system should include all groups of children, with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups of children and on children in especially difficult circumstances, and adequate disaggregated data should be identified with a view to assessing progress achieved in the realization of children's rights and defining the policies to be adopted to better implement the provisions of the Convention. With regard to the latter, the Committee suggests that further studies and follow-up surveys on

vulnerable groups of children be initiated and it recommends that the State party consider requesting technical assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to address this question.

86. The Committee recommends that the Government pursue the process of bringing existing legislation into line with the provisions of the Convention and that the best interests of the child be fully taken into account in the drafting of new legislation. In this regard, the Committee particularly recommends that the provisions for the minimum age of marriage for girls at 15 years, the sentencing of children to corporal punishment, the "light bodily punishment" as an educational measure within the family, and the limitation of the right to legal counsel of children be abolished as a matter of priority.

87. The Committee recommends that with respect to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, budget allocations should be made to the maximum extent of the State party's available resources and should give priority to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, including the rights to health, education and rehabilitation, and that particular attention be paid to children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, such as girls, disabled children, children living in rural areas, children living and/or working in the street, children involved in the administration of juvenile justice system and children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans. In this regard, and with a view to contributing to the maximum use of scarce resources, the Committee recommends that the State party accord greater attention to the development of a primary health-care system, which would develop a culture of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.

88. The Committee recommends that special efforts be developed to guarantee an effective system of birth registration, in the light of article 7 of the Convention, to ensure the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights by all children. Such a system would serve as a tool in the collection of statistical data, in the assessment of prevailing difficulties and in the promotion of progress in the implementation of the Convention. Similarly, the Committee recommends that an adequate system of registration of refugee children be established to ensure that their rights are protected.

89. The Committee also recommends that greater efforts be made to promote the participation of children in family, school and social life, and the effective enjoyment of their fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of opinion, expression and association.

90. With reference to the implementation of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that a system of complaints aimed at children victims of any form of violence, abuse, including sexual abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, even while in the care of their parents, be established, as a means to ensure protection of and respect for their rights. It further recommends that cases of abuse be properly investigated, sanctions applied to the perpetrators and publicity given to the sanctions applied to such crimes. The Committee also recommends that a comprehensive and integrated public information campaign be elaborated with a view to preventing and combating all forms of abuse of children and that all necessary measures be taken to ensure

the physical and psychological recovery and the social reintegration of children victims of the war, in the light of article 39 of the Convention.

91. The Committee recommends that appropriate legislative measures be adopted and implemented with regard to adoption of children, in the light of the principles of the best interests of the child and respect for his or her views and articles 20 and 21 of the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

92. In the area of child labour, the Committee recommends that appropriate measures be adopted with a view to reflecting fully the Convention, in particular article 32, in legislation and practice, and suggests that consideration be given by the State party to ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for admission to employment. The Committee also suggests that the State party consider seeking cooperation with ILO in this area.

93. With regard to the administration of juvenile justice, the Committee recommends that legal reform be pursued and that the State party take fully into account the provisions of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40 as well as other relevant international standards in this area, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. The Committee also recommends that the State party avails itself of the technical assistance programmes of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the Secretariat.

94. The Committee recommends that special protection measures be adopted and implemented in relation to children living and/or working in the street, children in conflict with the law, in particular those deprived of liberty, children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans, abused and exploited children and children involved with child labour.

95. The Committee recommends that a meeting be organized, gathering international organizations working in the country, including agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, and competent national authorities, with the aim of assessing the needs for further international assistance with regard to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

96. The Committee recommends that the State party's next periodic report incorporate information on the measures taken and progress achieved in the implementation of the suggestions and recommendations made by the Committee in the present concluding observations.

97. Finally, the Committee recommends that in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by Ethiopia be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and

awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations: Panama

98. The Committee considered the initial report of Panama (CRC/C/8/Add.28) at its 353rd, 354th, 355th and 356th meetings (CRC/C/SR.353-356), held on 13 and 14 January 1997, and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

99. The Committee welcomes the initial report submitted by the State party. The Committee expresses its satisfaction at the constructive dialogue held and for the State party's self-critical approach in identifying a number of areas of concern. The Committee regrets, however, that neither the report nor the written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/PAN.1) contained information on specific measures taken by the State party to implement the Convention, including at the legislative level.

B. Positive aspects

100. The Committee notes that the Convention is directly applicable at the national level and can be invoked before the law courts or administrative authorities.

101. The Committee notes with satisfaction the efforts made by the Government of Panama in the field of law reform and welcomes the initiatives being undertaken by the Government to further the protection of the family and children by the adoption of the new Family Code, in force since January 1995. The Committee welcomes the promulgation of the Education Law which guarantees intercultural bilingual education for indigenous children and adults. The Committee notes with interest the Government's willingness to provide information and training to its staff, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

102. The recent establishment of a "People's Defender" which will monitor the enjoyment of human rights in Panama, including children's rights, is welcomed by the Committee.

103. The Committee notes with satisfaction the adoption of a Pact for Children to promote children's rights in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and a large number of non-governmental organizations. The Committee welcomes the project on "Education for tolerance, education for democracy, human rights, development and peace" set up in 1995 by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

104. The Committee notes the establishment of the Women's Department in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and also of the Panamanian Institute for Special Rehabilitation which aims at assisting disabled children.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

105. The Committee is aware that Panama is emerging from a period of social and political upheaval which has had adverse economic repercussions. The Committee notes with concern the long-existing disparities in wealth between different groups of the population which affects the most vulnerable groups and hampers the enjoyment of children's rights.

D. Principal subjects of concern

106. While taking note of the recent achievements in the field of law reform, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient measures taken by the State party to harmonize national legislation with the principles and provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee is concerned that the Family Code presently in force in Panama does not adequately address the rights recognized by the Convention.

107. The Committee is concerned that the national legislation establishes a different minimum age for marriage between boys and girls and that it authorizes the marriage of girls as young as 14 years of age. The minimum age for employment, which is under 12 in agriculture and domestic services, is also a matter of concern to the Committee. Further, the Committee is concerned that insufficient measures have been taken to protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation.

108. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient measures adopted to ensure effective coordination between different governmental departments competent in areas covered by the Convention as well as between the central and local authorities.

109. The Committee is deeply concerned about the insufficiency of measures to collect disaggregated statistical data and other information on the situation of children, especially those belonging to the most vulnerable groups. This type of information is lacking in particular with respect to girl children, children living and/or working in the streets, disabled children, children living in rural areas and indigenous children. The absence of qualitative and quantitative information on the status of children renders deficient the systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Convention.

110. The Committee is of the view that insufficient measures have been adopted to promote widespread awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention among adults and children alike, particularly those belonging to indigenous populations. The Committee is concerned at the lack of adequate and systematic training provided to professional groups working for and with children, including judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, health professionals, teachers, social workers, personnel working in child care institutions for children, police officers and officials of the central and local administrations.

111. The Committee expresses its concern at the insufficient budget allocation at all levels for social expenditures, in particular in favour of children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups of the population. The Committee notes with great concern the trend towards the perpetuation of poverty amongst marginalized groups of children in Panama, where 25 per cent of families live in poverty and 20 per cent live in extreme poverty. Despite the efforts made by the State party in the health and housing sectors, the situation is still precarious.

112. Particular concern is expressed by the Committee at the insufficient measures undertaken to ensure the effective implementation of the general principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in practice, especially with regard to the girl child and children belonging to indigenous groups and to poor families. The Committee is deeply concerned about the high incidence of abandoned children and by the fact that approximately 20 per cent of the children born each year are to adolescent mothers.

113. The Committee is concerned by the persistence of violence against children within the family, including the use of corporal punishment. In the light of article 17 of the Convention, the Committee is also concerned about the need for further measures to protect children from media information and material injurious to their well-being.

114. In the light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient measures, including of a legislative nature, taken by the authorities to regulate adoption adequately and to prevent and combat abuses, such as the trafficking of children.

115. While recognizing the efforts undertaken by the authorities in the education system, the Committee is concerned about the persisting disparities in relation to the low access to education of children living in rural areas, indigenous children and refugee children, who do not enjoy a system of education adequate to their cultural values and identity. The Committee is also worried about the low rates of retention, the high rates of repetition and school drop-outs, especially at the end of primary education, and by the persistent problem of illiteracy amongst these groups.

116. The Committee is concerned about the insufficient legal protection and the lack of adequate procedures for refugee children, especially unaccompanied minors. It is also concerned by the difficulties encountered by those children in securing access to education, health and social services. Finally, family reunification is also a matter of concern to the Committee.

117. The Committee notes with concern that child labour remains a problem in Panama. The high number of children involved in labour, especially in rural areas and in particular in coffee-growing areas as a result of a long-standing cultural pattern, is a matter of concern, as is the fact that the Government has not adequately enforced child labour provisions in the rural areas of the country.

118. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice, and in particular its lack of compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the

Convention as well as with other relevant international standards, is a matter of concern to the Committee. Moreover, the apparent absence in national legislation of minimum ages below which a child may not be deprived of liberty or be considered criminally responsible causes deep concern to the Committee.

D. Suggestions and recommendations

119. Within the context of the legal reform undertaken by Panama, the Committee recommends that children's issues be accorded a higher priority in the State party. The Committee also recommends that the State party adopt all the necessary measures to ensure the full compliance of its national legislation with the Convention. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to pursue its efforts aimed at the adoption of a Code on Children. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that any required changes to legislation be undertaken in the light of article 2 (non-discrimination), article 3 (best interests of the child), article 6 (right to life, development and survival) and article 12 (respect for the views of the child). In this spirit, the Committee recommends that the State party define in its legislation a minimum age below which children may not be deprived of their liberty. Similarly, measures must be undertaken to ensure the conformity of national legislation with the provisions of article 37 (a) of the Convention. Further, the Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation on the age of marriage for girls with a view to raising it. The Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to protect children against sexual exploitation.

120. The Committee encourages the State party urgently to develop a comprehensive national strategy on children and to pursue its efforts to strengthen the institutional framework to promote and protect human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular. In this regard, the Committee recommends that a permanent and multidisciplinary mechanism be developed to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Convention at both national and local levels and in urban and rural areas.

121. The Committee recommends that the establishment of an independent body, such as an ombudsperson, be given further consideration by the Government. The Committee also encourages the promotion of closer cooperation between the State party and non-governmental organizations.

122. The Committee further recommends that the State party give priority attention to the development of a system of data collection by age, gender, rural/urban and social ethnic origin, and to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society, to evaluate progress achieved and difficulties hampering the realization of children's rights. This is especially important in the case of Panama where historical disparities have endured, in particular with respect to female, rural and indigenous children. It is further suggested that the State party envisage requesting international cooperation in this regard, notably from UNICEF.

123. In the spirit of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, the Committee recommends that the State party take measures aimed at developing a culture of human rights and at changing attitudes towards

children in general, and in particular children belonging to indigenous groups. It therefore recommends that information and education about children's rights be disseminated to children and adults alike. Such information should be translated into the different languages spoken by indigenous people. Moreover, the existence of a high level of illiteracy in the country requires the use of the media in a manner adapted to the various levels of the audiences in the country.

124. The Committee recommends that training and education on the principles and provisions of the Convention be undertaken and addressed to all professionals working with or for children, including judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, health professionals, teachers, social workers, personnel working in child care institutions for children, police officers and officials of the central and local administrations. In addition, the Committee recommends that children's rights be included in the school curricula as a measure of enhancing respect for indigenous culture, promoting multiculturalism and combating the paternalistic attitudes prevailing in society. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to envisage seeking technical cooperation from appropriate international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and UNICEF.

125. With respect to articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, it is the opinion of the Committee that appropriate budgetary provisions should be made to the maximum extent possible. In this regard, particular attention should be given to children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups, with a view to providing adequate services, including in the areas of education and health, and to overcoming persisting disparities. The Committee emphasizes that the interrelated and integrated nature of the rights provided for in the Convention requires that the Convention be recognized as the general framework for reaching decisions on the allocation of resources for children. Moreover, in the light of article 4 of the Convention, international assistance provided to Panama should aim at the promotion of children's rights.

126. Further efforts are required to ensure the active participation of children and their involvement in all decisions affecting them in the family, at school and in social life, in the light of articles 12, 13 and 15 of the Convention.

127. The Committee recommends that effective public awareness campaigns be developed and that measures be adopted by the State party to provide appropriate assistance to the family in the performance of its child-rearing responsibilities, including parental guidance and counselling, with a view, inter alia, to preventing domestic violence and to prohibiting the use of corporal punishment as well as to preventing early pregnancies. It also recommends that the State party reinforce existing measures to protect children from harmful information.

128. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to regulate and monitor national and international adoptions in order to prevent any violations of the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially its article 21. It is also recommended that adequate training be

provided to concerned professionals. The Committee also suggests that Panama consider becoming a party to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

129. In the area of education, it is the view of the Committee that a range of measures should be undertaken by the State party to ensure the implementation of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention. Taking into account the strategy being developed, the Committee recommends that the State party focus greater efforts on eradicating illiteracy and on increasing access to school education by indigenous children and children living in rural areas. The Committee recognizes that this requires greater efforts in training teachers. The Committee also recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to fight school drop-outs and ensure retention.

130. As a means of tackling the integrated issues of education and child labour, the Committee recommends that all sectors of society and the economy become involved in implementing the Committee's recommendations that the Government undertake effective public campaigns to prevent and eliminate child labour, especially in rural areas, while systematically and forcefully encouraging the enrolment, retention and return of children to school. The Committee suggests that Panama consider becoming a party to ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment and review all relevant standards. Regulations to prevent child labour should be clarified and enforced, complaints should be investigated and severe penalties imposed for violations. The Committee also suggests that the State party consider seeking cooperation with ILO in this area.

131. The Committee recommends that the Government of Panama ensure adequate protection of refugee children, including in the field of education. Procedures should be developed in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to facilitate family reunification as well as to appoint legal representatives for unaccompanied children and to apply, when relevant, child-friendly interview techniques.

132. The Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and to ensure their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration in the light of article 39 of the Convention.

133. The Committee further recommends that the juvenile justice system be revised to ensure its compatibility with the principles and provisions of the Convention, including those of its articles 37, 39 and 40, as well as of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. In addition, it is recommended that the State party consider requesting technical assistance in this field from the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the Secretariat.

134. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies presented by Panama be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary

records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations: Myanmar

135. The Committee considered the initial report of Myanmar (CRC/C/8/Add.9) at its 357th to 360th meetings (CRC/C/SR.357-360), held on 15 and 16 January 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

136. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for the submission of written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/Mya.1). The Committee notes that the report, although following the thematic structure for reporting set out in the general guidelines, was incomplete in its appreciation of the situation of children in the country since it did not incorporate an assessment of factors and difficulties impeding the enjoyment of the rights of the child.

B. Positive factors

137. The Committee welcomes the fact that the State party has withdrawn its reservations on articles 15 and 37 of the Convention.

138. The Committee is encouraged by the fact that the State party has adopted a National Plan of Action and established a National Committee on the Rights of the Child in 1993.

139. The Committee welcomes the enactment of a national law on the protection of children in 1993.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

140. The Committee notes that the State party has been deeply affected by years of internal conflict that has gravely disturbed some regions of the country. Violence and instability have had a considerable negative impact on the situation of children in Myanmar: many of them have been subjected to various forms of violations of their rights and have been forced to flee areas affected by violence.

141. The Committee further notes that several years of unfavourable economic conditions in the State party have adversely affected the situation of the most vulnerable groups in society.

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

D. Principal subjects of concern

142. The Committee is concerned about the lack of conformity between the existing national legal framework and the principles and provisions of the Convention, namely the Citizenship Act, the Village and Towns Acts and the Whipping Act. The Committee is also concerned by the fact that the laws relating to freedom of expression and association and some sections of the Law on Child Labour raise doubts as to their conformity with the provisions of the Convention. It is also of the opinion that the law concerning juvenile justice is not guided by the Convention and other relevant international instruments. The age of criminal responsibility, at present seven years of age, is too low; torture is not clearly prohibited by existing legislation and no complaint procedure for children exists. The Committee is also worried that the law prohibiting discrimination fails fully to conform to article 2 of the Convention by not explicitly protecting children from discrimination "on the basis of ... political or other opinion ..., ethnic or social origin ..., disability" of the child or his/her parents. Finally, the Committee is concerned that the human rights of children are not yet integrated in a fundamental body of law.

143. The Committee is concerned that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Plan of Action have not yet been translated into concrete programmes, sectoral policies and allocation of necessary resources to ensure the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention throughout the country. Lack of evaluation and monitoring systems are also a matter of concern.

144. The Committee, while recognizing the efforts undertaken by the State party in the collection of data, is concerned that the system of data collection does not adequately disaggregate information so as to reflect the situation of all children, particularly those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, including children belonging to minority groups, children living in remote areas, disabled children, children living and/or working in the street, children placed in institutions, including institutions of a penal nature, ill-treated and abused children or children from economically disadvantaged groups. Such disaggregated data would contribute to the design of policies and programmes for the effective and full implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

145. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of an integrated strategy on children as well as of a fully effective monitoring mechanism for all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children in urban and rural areas, especially those affected by the consequences of the economic problems and by the internal conflict.

146. As regards the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern the inadequacy of measures taken to ensure the implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources. The Committee expresses particular concern at the insufficient budget allocation for social expenditures, in particular in favour of children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups of the population.

147. The Committee is also concerned that the general principles of the Convention, as laid down in its articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (best interests of the child), 6 (right to life, survival and development) and 12 (respect for the views of the child), are not being applied and duly integrated into the implementation of all articles of the Convention. The Committee is concerned that these principles are not adequately reflected in legislation and therefore are not properly integrated in all decisions and actions concerning children, including on the administrative and judicial levels. Concern is also expressed at the status and situation of children belonging to ethnic and religious minority groups, the girl child and children living in rural and remote areas. The insufficiency of measures taken by the authorities to prevent and combat discrimination against those groups of children is also a matter of concern.

148. With regard to the implementation of articles 2 and 3 of the Convention, the Committee is seriously concerned by the fact that the national identity card explicitly mentions the religion and the ethnic origin of each citizen, including children. It is also seriously concerned by the fact that the Citizenship Act establishes three different categories of citizenship and therefore some categories of children and their parents might be stigmatized and/or denied certain rights.

149. The Committee is concerned by the insufficient measures taken by the authorities to raise awareness and to provide education on the Convention to adults and children alike. The fact that the Convention is not translated into all national languages and is therefore not accessible to all children living in the territory of the State party is also a matter of concern, as is the lack of knowledge on the Convention among professional groups working for and with children, including judges, lawyers, law enforcement and army personnel, health professionals, teachers, social workers, and personnel working in child care institutions.

150. The Committee is concerned that the State party has not taken all legal and other appropriate measures to promote and implement the rights contained in articles 13, 14 and 15. Of particular concern is the fact that children considered poor are channelled towards monastic Buddhist schools and are offered no alternative educational opportunity. This might challenge the right to freedom of religion for non-Buddhist children who are enrolled in those schools. Deep concern is also expressed by the Committee with regard to the right of children to freedom of speech, association and peaceful assembly. Moreover, the Committee is seriously concerned by the recent closure of some high schools.

151. The Committee is concerned by the existing legal framework and procedures regulating adoption which are not in full conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially its articles 3 and 21.

152. The Committee expresses its concern about the high rates of infant mortality and malnutrition, as well as the low level of health services, which are partly due to poverty, deep disparities between urban and rural communities and the impact of the internal conflict. The Committee is also worried about the insufficient measures to offer appropriate and accessible social, rehabilitation and educational services to disabled children.

153. With regard to the implementation of articles 28, 29 and 30 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned by the high drop-out and repetition rates. It is also concerned by the lack of resources in the field of vocational training. Finally, the Committee is concerned by the insufficient measures taken by the State party to provide education in minority languages.

154. The Committee is seriously concerned by the impact of years of internal conflict which has generated important instability in several regions of the country and resulted in situations where families have been forcibly relocated or displaced, or encouraged to cross borders to seek for protection as refugees. The rights of most children involved in those population movements have not been properly addressed and safeguarded.

155. Reports from various sources concerning cases of abuse and violence perpetrated against children have raised grave concern within the Committee, particularly regarding numerous documented cases of rape of young girls by soldiers and cases of children systematically being forced into labour, including as porters.

156. Of equal grave concern to the Committee are the numerous reported cases of forced and under-age recruitment of child soldiers.

157. The Committee is concerned by the fact that children working in the family environment or in family enterprises are not protected by law. The Committee is also concerned about the abuse and exploitation of adopted children, especially in the area of child labour, and at the absence of legal safeguards to protect them.

158. Furthermore, the Committee expresses its regret that insufficient measures are being taken to address the problems of child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the sale and trafficking of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It is especially concerned by the fact that a significant number of girls, and sometimes boys, are victims of transnational trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in brothels across the border.

159. In light of article 39 of the Convention, the Committee is worried about the insufficient measures taken to provide physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration to children victims of any form of neglect, abuse and/or exploitation, particularly victims of armed conflicts, sexual exploitation and child labour.

160. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice, and in particular its lack of compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention, as well as other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, is a matter of serious concern to the Committee. Severe conditions of detention, the fact that deprivation of liberty is not used only as a measure of last resort, the lack of access by the child to legal assistance and judicial review, and the absence of a monitoring system are situations that remain of particular concern to the Committee.

161. The Committee is worried by the failure of the State party to cooperate with non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations in the framework of

existing international human rights mechanisms. The Committee is concerned about the impact of this situation on the daily life of every child living under the jurisdiction of the State party.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

162. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive review of the national legislation to bring it into conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially in the areas of non-discrimination, citizenship, freedom of association, corporal punishment, child labour, adoption and the administration of juvenile justice. The Committee also recommends that the Citizenship Act, the Village and Towns Acts and the Whipping Acts be repealed. Laws relating to the right to non-discrimination, freedom of association, child labour and juvenile justice should be amended so as to be fully compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to fully reflect the rights recognized by the Convention in a fundamental body of law.

163. The Committee recommends that the State party reinforce at all levels the role of the National Committee for the Rights of the Child in the implementation of the Convention. The State party should take all necessary measures to fully integrate the Convention and the National Plan of Action in all programmes and sectoral policies.

164. The Committee also recommends that the State party gather all necessary data on the situation of children in the various areas covered by the Convention, including on children belonging to the most vulnerable groups.

165. The Committee further recommends that a multidisciplinary monitoring system be established to assess the progress achieved and difficulties encountered in the realization of the rights recognized by the Convention at the central and local levels, and in particular to monitor regularly the effects of economic change and armed conflicts on children. Such a monitoring system should enable the State to shape appropriate and comprehensive policies to protect vulnerable groups and to bridge existing disparities between urban and rural areas. Efforts should be made to ensure implementation of policies and measures for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, in cooperation with United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and other international mechanisms, the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

166. The Committee recommends that the State party, in the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, undertake all appropriate measures to the maximum extent of its available resources to ensure that sufficient budgetary allocation is provided to social services for children and that particular attention is paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the "child-impact" of decisions taken by the authorities be assessed on an ongoing basis.

167. With regard to the full implementation of the principles laid down by articles 2, 3, 6 and 12 in the Convention, the Committee suggests that the State party fully integrate them in all its policies, laws, actions and programmes affecting children at all levels, including on the administrative and judicial levels, especially with regard to children belonging to ethnic and religious minority groups, the girl child, disabled children and children living in rural and remote areas.

168. In the field of the right to citizenship, the Committee is of the view that the State party should, in the light of articles 2 (non-discrimination) and 3 (best interests of the child), abolish the categorization of citizens, as well as the mention on the national identity card of the religion and the ethnic origin of citizens, including children. In the view of the Committee, all possibility of stigmatization and denial of the rights recognized by the Convention should be avoided.

169. While encouraged by initiatives taken by the authorities to raise awareness on the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party launch a systematic information campaign, for both children and adults, on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consideration should be given to the incorporation of the Convention in the school curricula and appropriate measures should be taken to facilitate access by children to information produced about their rights. The Committee suggests that the State party develop a comprehensive training programme, especially focusing on child abuse, for professional groups working for and/or with children, including judges, lawyers, law enforcement and army personnel, health professionals, teachers, social workers, and personnel working in child-care institutions. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the State party envisage cooperation with United Nations bodies, including UNICEF, the specialized agencies and national and/or international non-governmental organizations.

170. The Committee recommends that the national law and practice with regard to adoption be made to conform fully with the Convention, including the principle of the best interests of the child (art. 3). The Committee also suggest that the State party envisage ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

171. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including legal means, to fully implement articles 13, 14 and 15 of the Convention. It suggests that the State party give an alternative education choice to non-Buddhist and poor children and that the State party take all measures to fully guarantee the freedoms of association and speech as well as the right to peaceful assembly.

172. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to provide access to health services throughout the country and to all children, including the ones living in the most remote areas as well as the ones belonging to minority groups. The State party should also take appropriate action to offer better protection and access to social services to physically and mentally disabled children.

173. The Committee further recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including by reinforcing existing international cooperation programmes, to reduce the rates of school drop-out and repetition. It also recommends that the State party allocate resources to translate school materials into minority languages in order to encourage schools and teachers in the appropriate regions to provide education in minority languages.

174. While welcoming the recent peace agreements between the Government and a great majority of armed rebel groups in the country, the Committee strongly recommends that the State party prevent any occurrence of forced relocation, displacement and other types of involuntary population movements which deeply affect families and the rights of children. The Committee also recommends that the State party reinforce its central tracing agency to favour family reunification.

175. Furthermore, the Committee strongly recommends that all reported cases of abuse, rape and/or violence against children committed by members of the armed forces be rapidly, impartially, thoroughly and systematically investigated. Appropriate judicial sanctions should be applied to perpetrators and wide publicity should be given to such sanctions.

176. The Committee strongly recommends that the army of the State party should absolutely refrain from recruiting under-aged children, in the light of existing international human rights and humanitarian standards. All forced recruitment of children should be abolished as well as their involvement in forced labour.

177. With a view to fully protecting children who work within their family, the Committee recommends that the State party amend its existing legislation appropriately. The Committee also recommends that the authorities take all necessary measures to prevent and combat, by legal or any other appropriate action, the exploitation of adopted children including through labour.

178. The Committee also recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the sale and trafficking of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The Committee encourages the establishment of bilateral agreements between concerned parties to prevent and combat transnational trafficking and sale of children for sexual exploitation.

179. The Committee recommends that all necessary measures be taken by the State party to fully implement article 39 of the Convention, especially to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of armed conflict, abuse and neglect, any form of violence, including rape, child labour and forced labour, sexual exploitation and trafficking and sale. The Committee would like to suggest that the State party consider seeking international assistance in this area from appropriate United Nations bodies, including UNICEF, the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

180. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage undertaking a comprehensive reform of the system of juvenile justice in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and of other United Nations

standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to using deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time; to ensuring humane conditions of detention, taking into account the specific needs of children including separation from adult detainees; to the rights of the child to legal assistance and judicial review; to due process of law; and to the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary. Training programmes on the relevant international standards should be organized for all those professionals involved with the system of juvenile justice. An independent monitoring mechanism, national and/or international, should guarantee the full implementation of those rights. Finally, the Committee would like to suggest that the State party consider seeking international assistance in the area of the administration of juvenile justice from the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the Secretariat.

181. The Committee encourages dialogue and international cooperation, especially in the field of human rights, including those of children, between the State party and the international community. The Committee recommends that, in the spirit of international cooperation in the area of human rights, including children's rights, the State party implement all the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. While appreciating the fact that the Union of Myanmar is a State party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee also suggests that it envisage ratifying other major international human rights treaties.

182. The Committee recommends that in accordance with article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report presented by Myanmar be made widely available to the public at large and that consideration be given to publication of the report along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations: Syrian Arab Republic

183. The Committee considered the initial report of the Syrian Arab Republic (CRC/C/28/Add.2) at its 360th to 362nd meetings (CRC/C/SR.360-362) held on 16 and 17 January 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

184. The Committee wishes to express its appreciation for the constructive dialogue engaged with the delegation. While it welcomes the submission by the Syrian Arab Republic of its initial report and written answers to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/SYR.1), the Committee regrets the lack of information provided

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

on the implementation of the principles and provisions of the Convention in practice, preventing it from obtaining a more detailed picture of the situation of children within the country.

B. Positive factors

185. The Committee notes with appreciation that the Convention is fully incorporated into domestic law, and that the Civil Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure expressly provide that their provisions shall not apply in case they conflict with a provision of an international Convention in force in Syria. The Committee also welcomes the fact that a number of provisions of domestic law are currently being reviewed in order to ensure their conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

186. The Committee welcomes the initiatives taken by the Government, such as the establishment at the ministerial level of a Higher Committee for Child Welfare, the setting up of a National Committee for Children to monitor the implementation of the Convention in Syria and the adoption of a National Plan of Action to implement the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s.

187. The Committee notes with appreciation that education is free of charge at all levels and that it has been made compulsory at the primary level by the Compulsory Education Act No. 35 of 1981.

188. The Committee further notes with appreciation the intention of the Government to publish its initial report, as well as the summary records of the debate with the Committee and the concluding observations adopted thereon.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

189. The Committee notes that the State party, as a result of the occupation of a part of its territory, is not in a position to exercise control over all of its territory and consequently cannot ensure the implementation of the Convention in all parts of the country. The Committee also notes in this context that the important budget devoted to military expenditure and the insufficient budget allocated to the social sector may contribute to hampering the enjoyment by children of their rights under the Convention.

D. Principal subjects of concern

190. The Committee is concerned that the broad nature of the reservations made by the State party to articles 14, 20 and 21 of the Convention may cause misunderstandings about the nature of the State's commitment to implementing the rights covered by these articles.

191. While welcoming the existence of government bodies competent to deal with the welfare of children at the national level, the Committee expresses its concern at the insufficient coordination between these bodies as well as between national and local bodies in developing a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Convention.

192. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient measures taken to systematically gather reliable quantitative and qualitative data on all areas covered by the Convention in relation to all groups of children, so as to evaluate progress achieved and to assess the impact of policies adopted with respect to children, with particular emphasis on education, health, child labour, refugee children and children belonging to minorities, the girl child, children involved with the administration of juvenile justice, disabled children, children victims of abuse or ill-treatment and children living and/or working in the street.

193. While acknowledging the initiatives undertaken to promote awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention, the Committee remains concerned at the insufficient measures taken to ensure that the principles and provisions are made widely known to children, parents, officials and professionals working with and for children. In this regard, it is particularly concerned that the training in the field of children's rights provided to members of the police force and other law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, teachers at all levels of education, social workers and medical personnel is insufficient and not systematic. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of measures taken to publish and disseminate the text of the Convention within the public, in formats intended both for children and adults and according to their levels of education.

194. The Committee notes with concern that the best interests of the child, the prohibition of discrimination and the respect for the views of the child and his or her right to participate in family, school and social life are not fully reflected in domestic legislation and implemented in practice. It is also concerned at the lack of conformity of relevant domestic laws with the definition of the child under the Convention, especially at the low age of criminal responsibility (7) and of access to employment.

195. The Committee expresses its concern at the persistence of discriminatory attitudes towards girls, including the practice of early marriage, and towards children born out of wedlock. Moreover, the lower marriageable age for girls than for boys raises questions as to its compatibility with the Convention, in particular article 2.

196. As regards the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern the inadequacy of measures taken to ensure the implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of the State's available resources, with particular emphasis on health and education. The Committee is particularly concerned at the insufficient policies, measures and programmes for the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable children, especially children living in poverty, the girl child, disabled children, children victims of abuse, children belonging to minority groups and children who are living and/or working in the street.

197. The situation of refugee and Syrian-born Kurdish children is a matter of concern to the Committee in the light of article 7 of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee notes the absence of facilities for the registration of refugee children born in Syria, and that Syrian-born Kurdish children are considered either as foreigners or as maktoumeen (unregistered) by the Syrian

authorities and face great administrative and practical difficulties in acquiring Syrian nationality, although they have no other nationality at birth.

198. With regard to education, the Committee notes with concern the high drop-out rates from the secondary level, especially among girls, the high teacher/student ratio and the lack of adequate learning and teaching facilities. The Committee further notes that the school curricula do not yet contain a programme on human rights and children's rights education.

199. The Committee is concerned at the lack of appropriate measures to combat and prevent ill-treatment and abuse within the family and to provide physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration to children victims of such ill-treatment and abuse, and at the lack of information provided on this matter. The Committee also notes with concern that disciplinary measures in schools often consist of corporal punishment although it is prohibited by law.

200. The Committee notes with concern that the minimum age for employment of children is too low and that children working in family enterprises are not protected by the relevant provisions of Labour Act No. 91 of 1959, including on the minimum age of employment, the prohibition of night work and other protection measures with regard to harmful occupations. Furthermore, the Committee expresses its concern at reports of exploitation of child labour in the agricultural sector and at the lack of means available in rural areas to combat and prevent this phenomenon.

201. The Committee expresses its concern at the system of the administration of juvenile justice in the State party, which does not conform to articles 37 and 40 of the Convention and other relevant United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. It notes in particular that children may be deprived of liberty at a very low age and that sufficient attention has not been paid to date to find alternatives to institutional care of children.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

202. The Committee encourages the State party to review its reservations to articles 14, 20 and 21 of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee underlines that interpretative declarations by the State party might have the desired effect of clarifying the State position in respect of these particular rights.

203. While it welcomes the establishment of the Higher Committee for Child Welfare and the National Committee for Children, the Committee recommends that further efforts be developed, through these committees, to increase and systematize vertical coordination between central and local administrations and bodies involved in the protection of the rights of the child and in the implementation of the various policies and programmes thereon.

204. The Committee recommends that the system of data collection be improved and that it identify appropriate and specific disaggregated indicators to allow the identification of sectors where further action is needed and the

assessment of progress achieved in all areas covered by the Convention in all parts of the country and with regard to all groups of children, including children in especially difficult circumstances. The Committee notes the willingness of the State party to receive technical assistance in this particular area and it recommends that cooperation be developed with UNICEF. The Committee also suggests that the State party consider incorporating in its National Plan of Action data reflecting all areas covered by the Convention.

205. The Committee also recommends that the State party continue and increase its activities in the field of the promotion of public awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention, in the light of article 42 of the Convention, and that it set up programmes for the continuous training of officials and professionals working with and for children, including members of the police force and other law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, teachers at all levels of education, social workers and medical personnel. The Committee also recommends that, within the review of the school curricula currently under way, special emphasis be made on the incorporation of the general principles of the Convention in the programmes of education.

206. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue its efforts with a view to ensuring full conformity of its national laws with the Convention, having due regard for the general principles of the Convention, in particular those relating to the best interests of the child, the prohibition of discrimination and the respect for the views of the child and his or her right to participate in family, school and social life. In this regard, the Committee recommends that specific provisions be incorporated wherever appropriate, in the law to reflect those principles and that the provisions relating to the minimum age of marriage for girls, the age of criminal responsibility, the minimum age of access to employment and work in family enterprises be reviewed and brought into line with the principles of the Convention as a matter of priority.

207. The Committee recommends that information campaigns be launched to prevent and combat prevailing discrimination against girls. The Committee also recommends that appropriate pro-active measures be adopted for the protection of children born out of wedlock.

208. The Committee also recommends that, in the light of article 4 of the Convention, priority be given in budget allocations to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, with particular emphasis on health and education, and on the enjoyment of these rights by children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the ministries responsible for overall planning and budgeting be fully involved in the activities of the Higher Committee on Child Welfare and the National Committee on Children, with a view to ensuring that their decisions have a direct and immediate impact on the budget.

209. As regards the enjoyment of their rights under article 7 of the Convention by refugee children born in Syria and by Syrian-born Kurdish children, the Committee underlines that the right to be registered and to acquire a nationality should be guaranteed to all children under the Syrian Arab Republic's jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective, in particular, of the child's or his or her parents' or legal guardians' race,

religion or ethnic origin, in line with article 2 of the Convention. The Committee also recommends that the State party consider the ratification of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, as well as the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

210. The Committee recommends that special attention be paid by the authorities to the problem of ill-treatment and abuse of children within the family and of corporal punishment in schools. In this regard, the Committee stresses the need for information and education campaigns to prevent and combat the use of any form of physical or mental punishment within the family or in schools, as well as for the establishment of a complaint mechanism intended to benefit children victims of such ill-treatment or abuse. The Committee further recommends that mechanisms for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of such ill-treatment and abuse be established.

211. The Committee further recommends that the provisions of Labour Act No. 91 of 1959 relating to the protection of children with regard to employment be reviewed and brought into line with the Convention, in particular its article 32. The Committee suggests that the State party consider the ratification of ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for admission to employment.

212. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage undertaking a reform of the system of juvenile justice in the spirit of articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention and other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. To this end, the Committee suggests that the State party avail itself of the technical assistance programmes of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the Secretariat. The Committee further suggests that the setting up of an independent monitoring body to receive and consider complaints of children involved with the administration of juvenile justice be duly considered by the Syrian authorities.

213. The Committee recommends that, in view of the legislative review and adoption of policies by the State party in the spirit of the principles and provisions of the Convention, studies be conducted, in close cooperation with UNICEF and national and international non-governmental organizations, notably in the fields of health and family planning, education and human rights education, and early marriage and child abuse, including sexual abuse of children within the family.

214. Finally, while recalling the intention of the State party to publish its initial report, as well as the summary records of the debate with the Committee and the concluding observations adopted thereon, the Committee recommends, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, that such publications be made widely available to the public at large in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations: New Zealand

215. The Committee considered the initial report of New Zealand (CRC/C/28/Add.3) at its 363rd to 365th meetings (CRC/C/SR.363-365), on 20 and 21 January 1997, and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

216. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its detailed report, which has been prepared in conformity with the Committee's guidelines, and for the submission by the Government of New Zealand of written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/NZl.1). It notes with satisfaction the supplementary information provided by the delegation during and after the consideration of its report and the constructive dialogue with the delegation of the State party.

B. Positive factors

217. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Domestic Protection Act 1995 which provides greater protection to the victims of domestic violence than was available under the former domestic violence legislation, and in particular the extension of protection under the domestic protection system to children.

218. The Committee notes with interest the increasing emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of the impact on children of proposed legislation and policies affecting children. In particular, it welcomes the inclusion of specific monitoring and evaluation procedures for new policy proposals submitted to Cabinet.

219. The Committee welcomes the wide range of support services that are available to assist children with a disability to enhance their development and maximize their potential.

220. The Committee welcomes the application of the age discrimination provisions of the Human Rights Act 1993 to include coverage of young persons aged 16 years and older, and the fact that the Human Rights Commission can receive complaints from children.

221. The Committee welcomes the State party's initiative of convening a "Youth Parliament" as a means of realizing an important dimension of article 12 of the Convention.

C. Principal subjects of concern

222. The Committee is concerned about the broad nature of the reservations made to the Convention by the State party, which raise questions as to their compatibility with the object and purpose of the Convention. Moreover, the Committee regrets that the State party has not extended the Convention with respect to the territory of Tokelau, which is not at present a sovereign State and remains a non-self-governing territory in important respects.

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* At the 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997.

223. The Committee regrets that the State party's approach to the rights of the child appears to be somewhat fragmented, as there is no global policy or plan of action which incorporates the principles and provisions of the Convention, encompassing all the areas covered by the Convention.

224. The Committee notes with concern the lack of conformity of relevant domestic laws with the definition of the child under the Convention, especially with regard to the minimum age for charging a child with serious offences and the minimum age of access to employment. The Committee further notes with concern the appearance of a wide range of age cut-offs - which do not appear to be necessarily consistent - under legislation administered by various government entities for eligibility for different types of government support.

225. While viewing with interest the extensive delegation to non-governmental organizations of delivery of certain support services to children and their families, the Committee considers that the ultimate responsibility for the quality of such Government-supported services rests with the State party - be it at the central or local level - and that delegated programmes need careful monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the Committee also notes that the public funding of such non-governmental organizations may raise questions as to their independence.

226. The Committee notes with concern the insufficient measures adopted to ensure effective coordination between different governmental departments competent in areas covered by the Convention as well as between the central and local authorities. The Committee is concerned that this may not only result in a lack of a central focal point for coordinating governmental action, but also lead to inconsistency in government action.

227. The Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of measures to collect disaggregated statistical data, including in relation to the registration of complaints from children, and other information on the situation of children, especially those belonging to the most vulnerable groups. The absence of qualitative and quantitative information on the status of children makes the assessment of the implementation of the Convention difficult.

228. As regards the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that the extensive economic reform process undertaken in New Zealand since the mid-1980s has affected the budgetary resources available for support services for children and their families and that all necessary measures to ensure the enjoyment by children of their economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of the State's resources have not been undertaken.

229. The Committee regrets the rise in the number of single-parent families and is concerned about the lack of a concerted strategy by the State party to address the needs of children affected by this trend.

230. The Committee expresses its concern at the authorization provided by section 59 of the Crimes Act to use physical force against children as

punishment within the family, provided that the force is reasonable in the circumstances. Moreover, the Committee notes the insufficient measures taken to address the issue of ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse, within the family, as well as the issues of physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of such ill-treatment or abuse.

231. The Committee expresses its serious concern at the high rate of youth suicide in New Zealand.

232. The Committee notes with concern that the Maori population lags significantly behind the non-Maori population in most statistics of well-being, thus reflecting that insufficient measures have been undertaken to protect and promote the enjoyment of the rights of this population group, and of Maori children in particular.

233. The Committee notes with regret that the State party does not have a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of child labour, a basic minimum age of admission to employment, or a range of minimum ages for different types of work and working conditions.

234. The Committee expresses its preoccupation that government support services to refugees and asylum seekers, including children, appear to be differentiated according to whether persons are admitted as refugees under agreement with UNHCR or are present in the country as the result of an individual's application for asylum.

D. Suggestions and recommendations

235. In the spirit of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993 which urged States to withdraw reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee wishes to encourage the State party to take steps to withdraw its reservations to the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee encourages New Zealand to extend the application of the Convention with respect to the territory of Tokelau.

236. The Committee suggests that the State party prepare and adopt a comprehensive policy statement with respect to the rights of the child, incorporating the principles and provisions of the Convention, that could provide guidance to all those involved in support services delivered or funded by the Government.

237. The Committee recommends that the Government pursue the process of bringing existing legislation into line with the principles and provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the minimum age for being charged with very serious criminal offences and for access to employment be reviewed as a matter of priority.

238. While the Committee is encouraged that a review of all government policy, administrative practice and legislation is under way to determine consistency with the Human Rights Act 1993, the Committee suggests that a separate or complementary review take place, taking into account the

principles and provisions of the Convention, of all aspects of government policy, administrative practice and legislation having an impact on children. Furthermore, the Committee suggests that the office of Commissioner for Children be strengthened and that further consideration be given to measures which would give the office increased independence and make it accountable directly to Parliament.

239. The Committee recommends that a further review of the system of data collection be undertaken, giving priority attention to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators, including in the field of complaint registration, with a view to addressing all areas covered by the Convention and all groups of children, particularly the most disadvantaged.

240. The Committee recommends that, with respect to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, budget allocations should be made to the maximum extent of the State party's available resources and should give priority to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, and that particular attention be paid to children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups. The Committee also suggests that the State party undertake a study on the impact on children and their families of the economic reform process that has been ongoing for the last several years in terms of its impact on government budgetary resources available for support services, as well as on the impact of unemployment and changed conditions of employment on children, young persons and their families. Conclusions from such a study could be a useful starting point for developing a comprehensive strategy for future action.

241. The Committee suggests that a study on the projected needs of single-parent families be made in light of this increasing trend, and that measures be taken to supplement those already in place to avoid potential negative consequences for these children and their parents in the future.

242. The Committee suggests that the State party continue to give priority to studying the possible causes of youth suicide and the characteristics of those who appear to be most at risk, and take steps as soon as practicable to put in place additional support and intervention programmes, be it in the field of mental health, education, employment or another field, which could reduce this tragic phenomenon. In this regard, the State party may want to call on Governments and experts in other countries which also may have experience in dealing with this problem.

243. The Committee recommends that the State party review legislation with regard to corporal punishment of children within the family in order to effectively ban all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse. It further recommends that appropriate mechanisms be established to ensure the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of such ill-treatment and abuse, in the light of article 39 of the Convention.

244. While noting the efforts made by the Government in the areas of health, education and welfare with regard to the Maori population, the Committee

encourages the authorities to pursue and strengthen their programmes and activities to fill the remaining gap between the Maori and the non-Maori children.

245. The Committee recommends that the policy and law in relation to child labour be reviewed and that the State party consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for admission to employment.

246. The Committee recommends that all refugee children, including asylum seekers coming to New Zealand outside UNHCR-organized schemes, be given the benefit of introduction assistance and Government-delivered or -funded support services.

247. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the publication of the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including with the concerned non-governmental organizations.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Informal meeting

248. The Committee held its fifth informal meeting for two weeks in November 1996 in the Northern African region. Like the previous ones, this informal meeting, organized in close cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was designed to ensure wider awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as of the activities of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and its leading role in promoting action in favour of children and monitoring progress made by States parties in the realization of children's rights. The informal meeting was also intended to allow Committee members to better understand the situation of children in a given regional context, through on-site visits and contacts with government officials, representatives of United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and the donor community.

249. In the context of this meeting, the Committee visited two countries which had already submitted their initial reports, Morocco and Egypt.

250. For this reason, the presence of the Committee was an important occasion to assess steps undertaken by the States parties concerned as a follow-up to the recommendations addressed to them, while constituting an opportunity to encourage further action in the ongoing process of implementation of the Convention at the national level.

251. The fifth informal meeting was further intended to allow for substantive consideration of the subject of the rights of the girl in the specific context of the region.

252. The visit to Egypt was the occasion of the holding, for the first time, of joint meetings between the Committee (CRC) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), an event CRC had often recommended and reflected in its previous reports (see A/47/41, recommendation 3; CRC/C/10, recommendation 4; CRC/C/16, recommendation 3; CRC/C/20, recommendation 4; CRC/C/38, recommendation; and CRC/C/43, recommendation). Seven members of CRC and four members of CEDAW participated in the visit (including the Chairpersons of the two Committees), as well as representatives of UNICEF and the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights.

253. Four members of the Committee went on field visit to Morocco (10-15 November 1996) soon after the meeting with the delegation of the State party in October. The group met with the Minister of Justice concurrently appointed as Minister of Human Rights, as well as high-level representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The members of the Committee met the local government authorities in Fez and several non-governmental organizations involved in programmes for working children. In a rural area outside Marrakech, the group met with community leaders and visited integrated basic services projects. In Casablanca it met non-governmental organizations concerned with the relief and rehabilitation of street children and visited a centre for girls. The members of the Committee also met with national non-governmental organizations involved in a variety of projects for children.

254. During the country visit to Egypt, members of the two Committees and the other participants were received by Mrs. Mubarak, Chairperson of the National Commission on Women, and held meetings with Mr. Amr Mussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs, as well as a number of high-level government officials including members of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the National Commission for Women, and members of the Information and Decision Support Centre of the Cabinet of Ministers; members of Parliament; representatives of United Nations bodies and specialized agencies; representatives of the Donors' sub-group on Women in Development; non-governmental organizations involved in child rights and women's rights; and representatives of the media. A visit to an urban community project for women and children was organized. A workshop on girls' rights and women's rights chaired by the President of the Egyptian Parliament, who is also the present Chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, was also held on 20 November. Finally, private sessions were held between members of the two Committees.

255. The joint meetings enabled the two Committees to have a fruitful exchange of views on ways and means to strengthen cooperation between them, in the spirit of integrating human rights as a whole and as a first step to further interaction between treaty monitoring bodies in general. When reviewing their methods of work, members of the two Committees reiterated some of the issues raised at the seventh meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, including the need for CEDAW to be provided with more adequate servicing and the need to ensure an ongoing flow of information between CEDAW and the human rights programme on matters relevant to the rights of women (and girl children).

256. In this respect, mention was made of the various activities of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights in relation to women and children,

including the Plan of Action to strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the work of the Special Rapporteurs on violence against women and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and the relevant programmes of action adopted by the Commission on Human Rights. The attention of the Committees was drawn to present efforts to establish a link between the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the human rights website being developed by the Centre, and to the development of a database on treaty bodies. The need to define some priority issues of common interest (such as the withdrawal of reservations, health, education, protection against violence, development and participation) and to develop concrete social indicators on child rights and women's rights was also stressed. In this respect, it was suggested to incorporate in the general part of the reporting guidelines ("core document") gender-sensitive and life-cycle sensitive data. The importance of ensuring active and integrated participation by the United Nations agencies and bodies and non-governmental organizations in the reporting and implementation process and in raising the level of awareness on the rights of women and children at the national level was highlighted.

257. It was agreed that the meetings had contributed to establishing a framework for more interaction between the two Committees and it was decided to follow up with periodic meetings to ensure further collaboration in the future on a regular basis. The meeting scheduled to take place in New York on 9-11 December on health, reproductive and sexual rights with the participation of representatives of treaty bodies was seen as a good opportunity to continue and enlarge this collaboration.

258. The visit also provided the two Committees with an opportunity to receive concrete information on the implementation of the two Conventions at the country level, including progress achieved and obstacles still impeding the full realization of the rights of women and children in Egypt.

259. In the course of the workshop on girls' rights and women's rights, mention was made of the need to translate the complementarity between the two Conventions into concrete programmes of cooperation at all levels, including within the general framework of the United Nations human rights programme; the importance of disseminating information on both Conventions and their implementation mechanisms, and enlisting the support of the media in this regard; the relevance of raising awareness on child rights and women's rights and networking between the various relevant agencies and organs; the role of education as a tool for empowering women and increasing the participation of girls in the context of the country's development, in particular through the incorporation of international human rights instruments in the school curricula and qualitative improvement of education, including the elimination of stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination; the role of NGO coalitions in both areas and the possibility of developing joint plans of action; the need for NGOs to ensure a linkage with various sectors of civil society such as parliamentarians, magistrates, teachers and lawyers; the need to improve the data collection-system with a view to formulating strategies and policies at the country level and assessing the impact of a joint system of data collection on women and children for the effective implementation of both

Conventions; and the need to tackle problems related to the girl child and to the implementation of both Conventions in the general context of the political and socio-economic situation.

B. Review of developments relevant to the work of the Committee

260. At the 348th meeting, the Rapporteur informed the Committee about relevant developments at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

261. Since a similar exercise had taken place during the thirteenth session, attention was paid to important events which had occurred since October 1996. Her presentation is contained in annex IV to the present report.

262. At the same meeting the Chairperson informed the Committee about the Round Table on Approaches of Human Rights Treaty Bodies Towards Women's Health, with a Focus on Reproductive and Sexual Health Rights, organized jointly by the United Nations Population Fund, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, which was held in New York from 9 to 11 December 1996, and in which she had participated together with Mrs. Hoda Badran. The main goal of the meeting was the implementation of the Cairo and Beijing conferences' recommendations relating to women's health, including reproductive and sexual health, and the integration of issues relating to women's health rights into the monitoring and reporting mechanisms of the human rights treaty bodies. The meeting had provided, for the first time, an opportunity for representatives of all six human rights treaty bodies, relevant agencies and non-governmental organizations to assemble and exchange views on a specific theme, to evaluate steps taken in the past and to consider a future strategy to be developed jointly. In this regard, it was recommended to institutionalize periodic meetings of that nature with a view to addressing issues of a common interest. Moreover, it was proposed to organize a thematic day on the issue of reproductive and sexual health on the occasion of the annual meeting of persons chairing the treaty bodies, to take place in September 1997. On the same occasion, a joint meeting was organized between the two Chairpersons of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Executive Director of UNICEF. Moreover, a joint press conference organized by UNICEF, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights was held by the two Chairpersons, as a means to reaffirm the common commitments made at the Cairo Conference and to strengthen cooperation between the two treaty bodies. Finally, the Chairperson participated, together with the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, in a meeting organized by UNICEF on the follow-up to the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in August 1996.

263. Mrs. Flora C. Eufemio informed the Committee about the regional consultation on "The Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Challenge of Implementation" organized by Child Rights Asianet together with UNICEF from 4 to 8 November 1996 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, in which she had participated, together with Ms. Sandra Mason. The purpose of the meeting was to assist countries of the Asian-Pacific region in the process of monitoring and reporting under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

C. Cooperation with United Nations and other competent bodies

264. During the session, the Committee held an exchange of views with representatives of UNICEF's Nutrition Section who briefed the Committee on the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. It was stressed that breastfeeding was beneficial to the child, and mention was made of the potential risks of artificial feeding in the context of the best interests of the child and the right of the child to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, as called for under the provisions of article 24 of the Convention. In this connection, the relevance of article 24, paragraph 1 (e) highlighting the need for information, access to education and support in the use of the advantages of breastfeeding was mentioned. The advantages of the International Code as a practical aid and appropriate measure to protect and promote the right to the highest attainable standard of health were recalled.

265. The Committee held a meeting with the Director of the Inter-American Children's Institute, a specialized body of the Organization of American States, with a view to identifying areas where the cooperation between the two bodies could be strengthened and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child enhanced.

266. The Committee was informed about the main activities developed by the Institute, particularly in view of the decision of its Executive Board to ensure priority to the rights of the child within the political agenda of member States of the OAS. The Director expressed the willingness of the Institute to have an active role in the provision of technical assistance to States parties, in the preparation of reports on the implementation of the Convention, as well as in ensuring a follow-up to the recommendations made by the Committee during the consideration of those reports. In this regard, mention was made of steps already taken in the area of legal reform, as well as in the field of training of professionals working with children, including judges and lawyers.

267. He further stressed the importance of the dissemination of information on the Convention and its implementation process through OAS institutions and member States, as a means of enhancing awareness about the principles and provisions of the Convention, particularly in the countries where the Convention was in force, and of promoting its ratification in the case of signatory States. Cooperation with regional monitoring bodies including the Inter-American Court on Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Women would be strengthened, with a view to keeping the Committee informed about their relevant activities in the promotion of the rights of the child.

268. Finally, he informed the Committee about research activities developed by the Institute, expressing its willingness to cooperate closely in this field, including in relation to the annual thematic debates organized by the Committee.

269. After a fruitful exchange of views with members of the Committee, it was decided to further strengthen this cooperation with the Institute and to ensure an ongoing exchange of information. Reference was particularly made to the relevant role the Institute could play in promoting awareness and

disseminating information on the guidelines for periodic reports adopted by the Committee and in contributing to and participating in the thematic discussions held on children's rights.

270. The Committee also held a meeting with representatives of the International Labour Organization on ways of fostering existing cooperation and strengthening the protection of children against economic exploitation, particularly through labour. The representative of the ILO stressed the importance given by the ILO, both at headquarters and in regional and country offices, to the work of the Committee and especially to the concluding observations adopted following the examination of States parties' reports. In this regard, ILO was undertaking an evaluation of the impact of the concluding observations at the national level, and intended to present the results at the end of 1997. Moreover, the activities of the Committee on the Rights of the Child were periodically transmitted to various ILO bodies, including the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and the International Labour Conference. The representative of the ILO further recalled that the 1998 Labour Conference would consider a new instrument to combat the most dangerous forms of child labour, namely the employment of children in slave-like and bonded conditions and in dangerous and hazardous work. With that aim, a questionnaire had been prepared and sent to Governments to seek their comments on the contents of such a new ILO instrument. It was the view of the ILO that the suggestions of the Committee on this process would be of great value, and for this reason a meeting was organized with Mr. Tapiola, Deputy Director-General of the ILO.

271. During that meeting, Committee members stressed the importance of continuing to cooperate closely with the ILO in the process of setting new standards designed to abolish the intolerable forms of exploitation of children in hazardous work and activities. It was recalled that the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been widely ratified, and that its principles and provisions, particularly article 32, had called on States parties to have due regard to the relevant norms of international instruments, including in the areas of minimum ages for admission to employment and duration and conditions of employment.

272. Committee members further recalled that a general discussion had been organized on the protection of the child against economic exploitation (see A/41/49, paras. 560-572) when a set of important recommendations had been made, many of which were in fact reflected in the questionnaire prepared by the ILO.

273. This was the case of the areas identified as the most extreme forms of child labour. As did the ILO document, the Committee had called for the absolute prohibition of situations of servitude, including forced and compulsory labour, debt bondage, sale and trafficking of children, and activities using the child for punishable criminal purposes, including child prostitution and pornography or drug trafficking.

274. In its general debate, the Committee had further included a reference to all those activities that were dangerous or harmful to the child's physical, mental and spiritual development or were liable to jeopardize the future education and training of the child. In that regard, it was noted that

ILO standards usually emphasized the importance of "health, safety and morals", referred to in article 32 of the Convention, but failed to mention education, an area the future instrument would be in a position to incorporate.

275. It was also suggested that the question of the social reintegration of children victims of child labour should be considered in the new text, in the light of article 39 of the Convention and of the relevant recommendations made by the Committee in its general debate. Attention was also paid to the vulnerability of disadvantaged groups of children, including girls and children belonging to minority groups or who are indigenous, which in fact confirmed the relevance of the principle of non-discrimination, as recognized by article 2 of the Convention. Such a concern should also be reflected in the process of collecting data, which should, inter alia, be further disaggregated by ethnic and social origin.

276. In the area of monitoring, it was recalled that the Committee had stressed the importance of the establishment of a national mechanism with a comprehensive and multidisciplinary composition, which would act as a focal point, gather information, coordinate policies, monitor progress and consider new strategies for the protection of children from economic exploitation. The adoption of national programmes of action to eliminate all extreme forms of child labour was an important step in this direction. Similar consideration could be given to the adoption of regional and subregional programmes.

277. For all these reasons, the new instrument should contain a specific reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to the Committee, and promote a holistic approach to the protection of children's rights.

278. The Committee further suggested that in its research activities, the ILO should study the question of child labour within the family context, a situation still insufficiently documented but which paved the way for abuse, as some reports examined by the Committee had illustrated.

279. The Committee was also briefed about the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) by its Programme Manager. In the light of memoranda of understanding concluded with Governments in different parts of the world, support was being given to countries to develop their capacity to appraise the nature and extent of child labour, identify priority target groups, and adopt and implement policies and programmes aiming at the elimination of child labour. Both the ILO conventions and the Convention on the Rights of the Child constituted the legal framework for the activities pursued by the Programme, which gave due consideration to the concluding observations adopted by the Committee. The Programme Manager stressed that the elimination of child labour was high on the international political agenda, as illustrated by the various international conferences scheduled to take place in the near future on this topic, including a conference on the most intolerable forms of child labour to be held in February in Amsterdam, a conference to take place in October in Oslo, as well as regional meetings in Africa (Cairo, February 1997), Latin America and Asia (Bangkok, November 1997).

280. In the framework of its ongoing cooperation with non-governmental organizations, which had been of decisive importance to the implementation of the Convention, the Committee held an informal meeting with the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The discussions aimed at assessing, in view of the past experience, how best the NGO community could cooperate with the Committee. Particular attention was paid to the NGOs' written submissions to the Committee, to the value of the pre-sessional working group procedures, as well as to the impact of the backlog on the reporting process. The members of the Committee emphasized the relevance of NGO contributions to its work, including studying the concrete situation of children in States parties, identifying priority areas for action and suggesting concrete measures for improving the effective enjoyment of children's rights. The valuable input provided by NGOs to the thematic discussions of the Committee was also highlighted. The NGO Group was encouraged to keep those topics under consideration and to continue to promote a follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the Committee during its general debates.

281. The Committee also held a working meeting with a representative of Childwatch International, who spoke about the project on indicators on the rights of the child developed by this organization. The representative informed the Committee about the progress made in the different country studies, whose main framework was the Convention and its implementation process. The aim of the project was not simply to identify a list of core indicators, but rather to consider them in the national and cultural context within which the child was living. She noted the importance the project attached to the use of child rights indicators, with a view to disaggregating existing information and identifying the most disadvantaged children, rather than to traditional childhood indicators which would only point out general trends. The Committee expressed interest in continuing to be informed about this important project.

282. The Committee held an informal meeting with Mrs. Elisabeth Rehn, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The Commission was informed about the particular vulnerability of children, especially in the areas of education and health, and the importance of promoting tolerance and mutual understanding in the school curricula, as well as on the difficult situation of children who were refugees, internally displaced or orphans.

283. The exchange of views led to the reaffirmation of the relevance of ensuring close cooperation between the Committee and relevant mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights. In relation to the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, the Committee welcomed the attention paid in her reports to the human rights of children in the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

284. Reiterating its previous commitment to protect children's rights during and following situations of armed conflicts, the Committee participated in the third session of the working group on a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on involvement of children in

armed conflicts. The Committee was represented by Mr. Youri Kolosov and Mrs. Marta Santos Pais who made a statement on behalf of the Committee, which is reflected in the report of the Working Group (E/CN.4/1997/96).

285. The participation of Committee members allowed for an exchange of views on various aspects of the draft optional protocol, namely in relation to military schools and the need for their curricula to be guided by the aims of education as recognized by article 29 of the Convention, and the importance of incorporating a provision designed to prevent the recruitment of children by non-governmental groups under the age of 18.

D. Future thematic debate

286. The Committee decided to devote its next thematic debate to the consideration of the rights of children with disabilities, particularly in the light of the general principles of the Convention.

287. This debate is scheduled to take place on 6 October 1997. A working group was established, composed of Mrs. Karp, Mr. Kolosov and Ms. Mason, to prepare an outline for the discussion.

IV. DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTEENTH SESSION

288. The following is the draft provisional agenda for the fifteenth session of the Committee:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Solemn declaration by the newly elected members of the Committee
3. Election of officers of the Committee
4. Organizational and other matters
5. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with article 44 of the Convention
6. Consideration of reports of States parties
7. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies
8. Methods of work of the Committee
9. Future meetings of the Committee
10. Other matters.

V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

289. At its 371st meeting, held on 24 January 1997, the Committee adopted the draft report on its fourteenth session.

Annex I

STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED OR ACCEDED TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 24 JANUARY 1997 (189)

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession a/	Date of entry into force
Afghanistan	27 September 1990	28 March 1994	27 April 1994
Albania	26 January 1990	27 February 1992	28 March 1992
Algeria	26 January 1990	16 April 1993	16 May 1993
Andorra	2 October 1995	2 January 1996	1 February 1996
Angola	14 February 1990	5 December 1990	4 January 1991
Antigua and Barbuda	12 March 1991	5 October 1993	4 November 1993
Argentina	29 June 1990	4 December 1990	3 January 1991
Armenia		23 June 1993 a/	22 July 1993
Australia	22 August 1990	17 December 1990	16 January 1991
Austria	26 January 1990	6 August 1992	5 September 1992
Azerbaijan		13 August 1992 a/	12 September 1992
Bahamas	30 October 1990	20 February 1991	22 March 1991
Bahrain		13 February 1992 a/	14 March 1992
Bangladesh	26 January 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Barbados	19 April 1990	9 October 1990	8 November 1990
Belarus	26 January 1990	1 October 1990	31 October 1990
Belgium	26 January 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
Belize	2 March 1990	2 May 1990	2 September 1990
Benin	25 April 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bhutan	4 June 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bolivia	8 March 1990	26 June 1990	2 September 1990
Bosnia and Herzegovina b/			6 March 1992
Botswana		14 March 1995 a/	13 April 1995
Brazil	26 January 1990	24 September 1990	24 October 1990
Brunei Darussalam		27 December 1995 a/	26 January 1996
Bulgaria	31 May 1990	3 June 1991	3 July 1991
Burkina Faso	26 January 1990	31 August 1990	30 September 1990
Burundi	8 May 1990	19 October 1990	18 November 1990
Cambodia	22 September 1992	15 October 1992	14 November 1992
Cameroon	25 September 1990	11 January 1993	10 February 1993

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a/ Accession.

b/ Succession.

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Canada	28 May 1990	13 December 1991	12 January 1992
Cape Verde		4 June 1992 a/	4 July 1992
Central African Republic	30 July 1990	23 April 1992	23 May 1992
Chad	30 September 1990	2 October 1990	1 November 1990
Chile	26 January 1990	13 August 1990	12 September 1990
China	29 August 1990	2 March 1992	1 April 1992
Colombia	26 January 1990	28 January 1991	27 February 1991
Comoros	30 September 1990	22 June 1993	21 July 1993
Congo		14 October 1993 a/	13 November 1993
Costa Rica	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Côte d'Ivoire	26 January 1990	4 February 1991	6 March 1991
Croatia b/			8 October 1991
Cuba	26 January 1990	21 August 1991	20 September 1991
Cyprus	5 October 1990	7 February 1991	9 March 1991
Czech Republic b/			1 January 1993
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	23 August 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Denmark	26 January 1990	19 July 1991	18 August 1991
Djibouti	30 September 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991
Dominica	26 January 1990	13 March 1991	12 April 1991
Dominican Republic	8 August 1990	11 June 1991	11 July 1991
Ecuador	26 January 1990	23 March 1990	2 September 1990
Egypt	5 February 1990	6 July 1990	2 September 1990
El Salvador	26 January 1990	10 July 1990	2 September 1990
Equatorial Guinea		15 June 1992 a/	15 July 1992
Eritrea	20 December 1993	3 August 1994	2 September 1994
Estonia		21 October 1991 a/	20 November 1991
Ethiopia		14 May 1991 a/	13 June 1991
Fiji	2 July 1993	13 August 1993	12 September 1993
Finland	26 January 1990	20 June 1991	20 July 1991
France	26 January 1990	7 August 1990	6 September 1990
Gabon	26 January 1990	9 February 1994	11 March 1994
Gambia	5 February 1990	8 August 1990	7 September 1990
Georgia		2 June 1994 a/	2 July 1994
Germany	26 January 1990	6 March 1992	5 April 1992
Ghana	29 January 1990	5 February 1990	2 September 1990

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Greece	26 January 1990	11 May 1993	10 June 1993
Grenada	21 February 1990	5 November 1990	5 December 1990
Guatemala	26 January 1990	6 June 1990	2 September 1990
Guinea		13 July 1990 a/	2 September 1990
Guinea-Bissau	26 January 1990	20 August 1990	19 September 1990
Guyana	30 September 1990	14 January 1991	13 February 1991
Haiti	20 January 1990	8 June 1995	8 July 1995
Holy See	20 April 1990	20 April 1990	2 September 1990
Honduras	31 May 1990	10 August 1990	9 September 1990
Hungary	14 March 1990	7 October 1991	6 November 1991
Iceland	26 January 1990	28 October 1992	27 November 1992
India		11 December 1992 a/	11 January 1993
Indonesia	26 January 1990	5 September 1990	5 October 1990
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	5 September 1991	13 July 1994	12 August 1994
Iraq		15 June 1994 a/	15 July 1994
Ireland	30 September 1990	28 September 1992	28 October 1992
Israel	3 July 1990	3 October 1991	2 November 1991
Italy	26 January 1990	5 September 1991	5 October 1991
Jamaica	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Japan	21 September 1990	22 April 1994	22 May 1994
Jordan	29 August 1990	24 May 1991	23 June 1991
Kazakstan	16 February 1994	12 August 1994	11 September 1994
Kenya	26 January 1990	30 July 1990	2 September 1990
Kiribati		11 December 1995 a/	10 January 1996
Kuwait	7 June 1990	21 October 1991	20 November 1991
Kyrgyzstan		7 October 1994	6 November 1994
Lao People's Democratic Republic		8 May 1991 a/	7 June 1991
Latvia		14 April 1992 a/	14 May 1992
Lebanon	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Lesotho	21 August 1990	10 March 1992	9 April 1992
Liberia	26 April 1990	4 June 1993	4 July 1993
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 April 1993 a/	15 May 1993
Liechtenstein	30 September 1990	22 December 1995	21 January 1996
Lithuania		31 January 1992 a/	1 March 1992
Luxembourg	21 March 1990	7 March 1994	6 April 1994

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Madagascar	19 April 1990	19 March 1991	18 April 1991
Malawi		2 January 1991 a/	1 February 1991
Malaysia		17 February 1995 a/	19 March 1995
Maldives	21 August 1990	11 February 1991	13 March 1991
Mali	26 January 1990	20 September 1990	20 October 1990
Malta	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Marshall Islands	14 April 1993	4 October 1993	3 November 1993
Mauritania	26 January 1990	16 May 1991	15 June 1991
Mauritius		26 July 1990 a/	2 September 1990
Mexico	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Micronesia (Federated States of)		5 May 1993 a/	4 June 1993
Monaco		21 June 1993 a/	21 July 1993
Mongolia	26 January 1990	5 July 1990	2 September 1990
Morocco	26 January 1990	21 June 1993	21 July 1993
Mozambique	30 September 1990	26 April 1994	26 May 1994
Myanmar		15 July 1991 a/	14 August 1991
Namibia	26 September 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nauru		27 July 1994 a/	26 August 1994
Nepal	26 January 1990	14 September 1990	14 October 1990
Netherlands	26 January 1990	6 February 1995	7 March 1995
New Zealand	1 October 1990	6 April 1993	6 May 1993
Nicaragua	6 February 1990	5 October 1990	4 November 1990
Niger	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nigeria	26 January 1990	19 April 1991	19 May 1991
Niue		20 December 1995 a/	19 January 1996
Norway	26 January 1990	8 January 1991	7 February 1991
Oman		9 December 1996 a/	8 January 1997
Pakistan	20 September 1990	12 November 1990	12 December 1990
Palau		4 August 1995 a/	3 September 1995
Panama	26 January 1990	12 December 1990	11 January 1991
Papua New Guinea	30 September 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Paraguay	4 April 1990	25 September 1990	25 October 1990
Peru	26 January 1990	4 September 1990	4 October 1990
Philippines	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Poland	26 January 1990	7 June 1991	7 July 1991

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Portugal	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Qatar	8 December 1992	3 April 1995	3 May 1995
Republic of Korea	25 September 1990	20 November 1991	20 December 1991
Republic of Moldova		26 January 1993 a/	25 February 1993
Romania	26 January 1990	28 September 1990	28 October 1990
Russian Federation	26 January 1990	16 August 1990	15 September 1990
Rwanda	26 January 1990	24 January 1991	23 February 1991
Saint Kitts and Nevis	26 January 1990	24 July 1990	2 September 1990
Saint Lucia		16 June 1993 a/	16 July 1993
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	20 September 1993	26 October 1993	25 November 1993
Samoa	30 September 1990	29 November 1994	29 December 1994
San Marino		25 November 1991 a/	25 December 1991
Sao Tome and Principe		14 May 1991 a/	13 June 1991
Saudi Arabia		26 January 1996 a/	25 February 1996
Senegal	26 January 1990	31 July 1990	2 September 1990
Seychelles		7 September 1990 a/	7 October 1990
Sierra Leone	13 February 1990	18 June 1990	2 September 1990
Singapore		5 October 1995 a/	4 November 1995
Slovakia b/			1 January 1993
Slovenia b/			25 June 1991
Solomon Islands		10 April 1995 a/	10 May 1995
South Africa	29 January 1993	16 June 1995	16 July 1995
Spain	26 January 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991
Sri Lanka	26 January 1990	12 July 1991	11 August 1991
Sudan	24 July 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Suriname	26 January 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Swaziland	22 August 1990	7 September 1995	6 October 1995
Sweden	26 January 1990	29 June 1990	2 September 1990
Syrian Arab Republic	18 September 1990	15 July 1993	14 August 1993
Tajikistan		26 October 1993 a/	25 November 1993

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Thailand		27 March 1992 a/	26 April 1992
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia b/			17 September 1991
Togo	26 January 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Tonga		6 November 1995 a/	6 December 1995
Trinidad and Tobago	30 September 1990	5 December 1991	4 January 1992
Tunisia	26 February 1990	30 January 1992	29 February 1992
Turkey	14 September 1990	4 April 1995	4 May 1995
Turkmenistan		20 September 1993 a/	19 October 1993
Tuvalu		22 September 1995 a/	22 October 1995
Uganda	17 August 1990	17 August 1990	16 September 1990
Ukraine	21 February 1991	28 August 1991	27 September 1991
United Arab Emirates		3 January 1997 a/	2 February 1997
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	19 April 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
United Republic of Tanzania	1 June 1990	10 June 1991	10 July 1991
Uruguay	26 January 1990	20 November 1990	20 December 1990
Uzbekistan		29 June 1994 a/	29 July 1994
Vanuatu	30 September 1990	7 July 1993	6 August 1993
Venezuela	26 January 1990	13 September 1990	13 October 1990
Viet Nam	26 January 1990	28 February 1990	2 September 1990
Yemen	13 February 1990	1 May 1991	31 May 1991
Yugoslavia	26 January 1990	3 January 1991	2 February 1991
Zaire	20 March 1990	27 September 1990	27 October 1990
Zambia	30 September 1990	5 December 1991	5 January 1992
Zimbabwe	8 March 1990	11 September 1990	11 October 1990

Annex II

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Name of member	Country of nationality
Mrs. Hoda BADRAN*	Egypt
Mrs. Akila BELEMBAOGO**	Burkina Faso
Mrs. Flora C. EUFEMIO*	Philippines
Mr. Thomas HAMMARBERG**	Sweden
Mrs. Judith KARP**	Israel
Mr. Youri KOLOSOV**	Russian Federation
Miss Sandra Prunella MASON**	Barbados
Mr. Swithun Tachiona MOMBESHORA*	Zimbabwe
Mrs. Marta SANTOS PAIS*	Portugal
Mrs. Marilia SARDENBERG*	Brazil

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* Term expires on 28 February 1997.

** Term expires on 28 February 1999.

Annex III

STATUS OF SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 24 JANUARY 1997

Initial reports due in 1992

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Bangladesh	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	15 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.38 & Add.49
Barbados	8 November 1990	7 November 1992	12 September 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.45
Belarus	31 October 1990	30 October 1992	12 February 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.14
Belize	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	1 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.46
Benin	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	22 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.52
Bhutan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992		
Bolivia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	14 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.2
Brazil	24 October 1990	23 October 1992		
Burkina Faso	30 September 1990	29 September 1992	7 July 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.19
Burundi	18 November 1990	17 November 1992		
Chad	1 November 1990	31 October 1992	14 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.50
Chile	12 September 1990	11 September 1992	22 June 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.18
Costa Rica	20 September 1990	20 September 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.8
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	13 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.41
Ecuador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	11 June 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.44

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Egypt	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	23 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.6
El Salvador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	3 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.9 & Add.28
France	6 September 1990	5 September 1992	8 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.15
Gambia	7 September 1990	6 September 1992		
Ghana	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.39
Grenada	5 December 1990	4 December 1992		
Guatemala	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	5 January 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.33
Guinea	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.48
Guinea-Bissau	19 September 1990	18 September 1992		
Holy See	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	2 March 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.27
Honduras	9 September 1990	8 September 1992	11 May 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.17
Indonesia	5 October 1990	4 October 1992	17 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.10 & CRC/C/3/Add.26
Kenya	2 September 1990	1 September 1992		
Mali	20 October 1990	19 October 1992		
Malta	30 October 1990	29 October 1992		
Mauritius	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	25 July 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.36
Mexico	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	15 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.11
Mongolia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 October 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.32
Namibia	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	21 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.12

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Nepal	14 October 1990	13 October 1992	10 April 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.34
Nicaragua	4 November 1990	3 November 1992	12 January 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.25
Niger	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	27 April 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.29
Pakistan	12 December 1990	11 December 1992	25 January 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.13
Paraguay	25 October 1990	24 October 1992	30 August 1993 and 13 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.22 & CRC/C/3/Add.47
Peru	4 October 1990	3 October 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.7 & CRC/C/3/Add.24
Philippines	20 September 1990	19 September 1992	21 September 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.23
Portugal	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	17 August 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.30
Romania	28 October 1990	27 October 1992	14 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.16
Russian Federation	15 September 1990	14 September 1992	16 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	21 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.51
Senegal	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	12 September 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.31
Seychelles	7 October 1990	6 October 1992		
Sierra Leone	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	10 April 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.43
Sudan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	29 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.3 & CRC/C/3/Add.20
Sweden	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	7 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.1
Togo	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	27 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.42

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Uganda	16 September 1990	15 September 1992	1 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.40
Uruguay	20 December 1990	19 December 1992	2 August 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.37
Venezuela	13 October 1990	12 October 1992		
Viet Nam	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	30 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.4 & CRC/C/3/Add.21
Zaire	27 October 1990	26 October 1992		
Zimbabwe	11 October 1990	10 October 1992	23 May 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.35

Initial reports due in 1993

Angola	4 January 1991	3 January 1991		
Argentina	3 January 1991	2 January 1993	17 March 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.2 & CRC/C/8/Add.17
Australia	16 January 1991	15 January 1993	8 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.31
Bahamas	22 March 1991	21 March 1993		
Bulgaria	3 July 1991	2 July 1993	29 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.29
Colombia	27 February 1991	26 February 1993	14 April 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.3
Côte d'Ivoire	6 March 1991	5 March 1993		
Croatia	7 November 1991	6 November 1993	8 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.19
Cuba	20 September 1991	19 September 1993	27 October 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.30
Cyprus	9 March 1991	8 March 1993	22 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.24
Denmark	18 August 1991	17 August 1993	14 September 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.8

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Djibouti	5 January 1991	4 January 1993		
Dominica	12 April 1991	11 April 1993		
Dominican Republic	11 July 1991	10 July 1993		
Estonia	20 November 1991	19 November 1993		
Ethiopia	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	10 August 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.27
Finland	20 July 1991	19 July 1993	12 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.22
Guyana	13 February 1991	12 February 1993		
Hungary	6 November 1991	5 November 1993	28 June 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.34
Israel	2 November 1991	1 November 1993		
Italy	5 October 1991	4 October 1993	11 October 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.18
Jamaica	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	25 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.12
Jordan	23 June 1991	22 June 1993	25 May 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.4
Kuwait	20 November 1991	19 November 1993	23 August 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.35
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7 June 1991	6 June 1993	18 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.32
Lebanon	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	21 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.23
Madagascar	18 April 1991	17 May 1993	20 July 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.5
Malawi	1 February 1991	31 January 1993		
Maldives	13 March 1991	12 March 1993	6 July 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.15
Mauritania	15 June 1991	14 June 1993		

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Myanmar	14 August 1991	13 August 1993	14 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.9
Nigeria	19 May 1991	18 May 1993	19 July 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.26
Norway	7 February 1991	6 February 1993	30 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.7
Panama	11 January 1991	10 January 1993	19 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.28
Poland	7 July 1991	6 July 1993	11 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.11
Republic of Korea	20 December 1991	19 December 1993	17 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.21
Rwanda	23 February 1991	22 February 1993	30 September 1992	CRC/C/8/Add.1
San Marino	25 December 1991	24 December 1993		
Sao Tome and Principe	13 June 1991	12 June 1993		
Slovenia	25 June 1991	24 June 1993	29 May 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.25
Spain	5 January 1991	4 January 1993	10 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.6
Sri Lanka	11 August 1991	10 August 1993	23 March 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.13
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 September 1991	16 September 1993		
Ukraine	27 September 1991	26 September 1993	8 October 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.10/Rev.1
United Republic of Tanzania	10 July 1991	9 July 1993	29 April 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.14
Yemen	31 May 1991	30 May 1993	14 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.20
Yugoslavia	2 February 1991	1 February 1993	21 September 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.16

Initial reports due in 1994

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Albania	28 March 1992	27 March 1994		
Austria	5 September 1992	4 September 1994	8 October 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.14
Azerbaijan	12 September 1992	11 September 1994	9 November 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.8
Bahrain	14 March 1992	14 March 1994		
Belgium	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	12 July 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6 March 1992	5 March 1994		
Cambodia	14 November 1992	15 November 1994		
Canada	12 January 1992	11 January 1994	17 June 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.3
Cape Verde	4 July 1992	3 July 1994		
Central African Republic	23 May 1992	23 May 1994		
China	1 April 1992	31 March 1994	27 March 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.7
Czech Republic	1 January 1993	31 December 1994	4 March 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.11
Equatorial Guinea	15 July 1992	14 July 1994		
Germany	5 April 1992	4 May 1994	30 August 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.5
Iceland	27 November 1992	26 November 1994	30 November 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.6
Ireland	28 October 1992	27 October 1994	4 April 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.12
Latvia	14 May 1992	13 May 1994		
Lesotho	9 April 1992	8 April 1994		
Lithuania	1 March 1992	28 February 1994		

Initial reports due in 1994 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Slovakia	1 January 1993	31 December 1994		
Thailand	26 April 1992	25 April 1994	23 August 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.13
Trinidad and Tobago	4 January 1992	3 January 1994	16 February 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.10
Tunisia	29 February 1992	28 February 1994	16 May 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	15 March 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.1 and Add.9
Zambia	5 January 1992	4 January 1994		

Initial reports due in 1995

Algeria	16 May 1993	15 May 1995	16 November 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.4
Antigua and Barbuda	4 November 1993	3 November 1995		
Armenia	23 July 1993	5 August 1995		
Cameroon	10 February 1993	9 February 1995		
Comoros	22 July 1993	21 July 1995		
Congo	13 November 1993	12 November 1995		
Fiji	12 September 1993	11 September 1995	12 June 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.7
Greece	10 June 1993	9 June 1995		
India	11 January 1993	10 January 1995		
Liberia	4 July 1993	3 July 1995		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 May 1993	14 May 1995	23 May 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.6

Initial reports due in 1995 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Marshall Islands	3 November 1993	2 November 1995		
Micronesia (Federated States of)	4 June 1993	3 June 1995	16 April 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.5
Monaco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995		
Morocco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995	27 July 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.1
New Zealand	6 May 1993	5 May 1995	29 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.3
Papua New Guinea	31 March 1993	31 March 1995		
Republic of Moldova	25 February 1993	24 February 1995		
Saint Lucia	16 July 1993	15 July 1995		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	25 November 1993	24 November 1995		
Suriname	31 March 1993	31 March 1995		
Syrian Arab Republic	14 August 1993	13 August 1995	22 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.2
Tajikistan	25 November 1993	24 November 1995		
Turkmenistan	20 October 1993	19 October 1995		
Vanuatu	6 August 1993	5 August 1995		

Initial reports due in 1996

Afghanistan	27 April 1994	26 April 1996		
Gabon	11 March 1994	10 March 1996		
Luxembourg	6 April 1994	5 April 1996	26 July 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.2

Initial reports due in 1996 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Japan	22 May 1994	21 May 1996	30 May 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.1
Mozambique	26 May 1994	25 May 1996		
Georgia	2 July 1994	1 July 1996		
Iraq	15 July 1994	14 July 1996	6 August 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.3
Uzbekistan	29 July 1994	28 July 1996		
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	12 August 1994	11 August 1996		
Nauru	26 August 1994	25 August 1996		
Eritrea	2 September 1994	1 September 1996		
Kazakstan	11 September 1994	10 September 1996		
Kyrgyzstan	6 November 1994	5 November 1996		
Samoa	29 December 1994	28 December 1996		

Initial reports due in 1997

Netherlands	7 March 1995	6 March 1997
Malaysia	19 March 1995	18 March 1997
Botswana	13 April 1995	12 April 1997
Qatar	3 May 1995	2 May 1997
Turkey	4 May 1995	3 May 1997
Solomon Islands	10 May 1995	9 May 1997
Haiti	8 July 1995	7 July 1997

Initial reports due in 1997 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
South Africa	16 July 1995	15 July 1997		
Pilau	3 September 1995	3 September 1997		
Swaziland	6 October 1995	5 October 1997		
Tuvalu	22 October 1995	21 October 1997		
Singapore	4 November 1995	3 November 1997		
Tonga	6 December 1995	5 December 1997		

Initial reports due in 1998

Kiribati	10 January 1996	9 January 1998		
Niue	19 January 1996	18 January 1998		
Liechtenstein	21 January 1996	20 January 1998		
Brunei Darussalam	26 January 1996	25 January 1998		
Andorra	1 February 1996	31 January 1998		
Saudi Arabia	25 February 1996	24 February 1998		

Annex IV

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPORTANT STEPS TAKEN IN THE FIELD OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Presentation by the Rapporteur, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais

I. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As the Assistant Secretary-General noted in his introductory statement, important resolutions were adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session in the field of children's rights, including on the girl child (resolution 51/76) and an omnibus resolution on the rights of the child (resolution 51/77). The latter addressed comprehensively the various areas related to the implementation of the Convention. It was the result of wide negotiations, which explains the large number of sponsors and its adoption without a vote.

Some sections of the resolution deserve special reference.

A. Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

In the resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed that all States had a duty to fulfil the obligations arising from the Convention and urged States to review their reservations to the Convention. It noted with appreciation the role of the Committee in creating awareness of the Convention and in providing recommendations to States parties on its implementation. The text also called upon States to ensure that the education of the child is carried out in accordance with the Convention.

B. Protection of children affected by armed conflict

In this section the Assembly welcomed the report of Mrs. G. Machel on the impact of armed conflict on children (A/51/306 and Add.1) and took note with appreciation of the recommendations made therein. The study had been requested by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Amongst the recommendations contained in the report, reference should be made to the request made for the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to:

(a) Assess progress occurred in this field;

(b) Raise awareness and promote collection of information;

(c) Work closely with the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

For its part, the Committee is requested to provide information on the measures adopted in this area. Consideration of States parties' reports should thus constitute an important opportunity to gather and reflect on such information.

C. Refugee and internationally displaced children

The text stresses, inter alia, the fundamental importance of the rights of such children, including in the areas of health, education, registration, family tracing and reunification, protection against violence and abuse.

D. Prevention and eradication of the sale of children and of their sexual exploitation, including child prostitution and child pornography

The text calls on States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to fulfil their obligation under article 34 of the Convention and to support efforts aimed at adopting effective national, bilateral and multilateral measures for the prevention and eradication of such practices. The Assembly requested States to implement measures, including those outlined in the Declaration and Agenda for Action of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, including criminalizing commercial sexual exploitation and other forms of sexual exploitation of children, reviewing and revising, where necessary, laws, policies, programmes and practices; prosecution of those who commit sexual offences against children in the context of sex tourism either in the country of origin or in the country of destination, and strengthening international cooperation.

E. Elimination of exploitation of child labour

In this section, the Assembly encouraged States to ratify the relevant ILO conventions and to take the necessary legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children in employment. It urged Governments to take measures to eliminate all extreme forms of child labour, such as forced labour, bonded labour and other forms of slavery. It called on relevant United Nations bodies, in particular ILO and UNICEF, to support national efforts and called on Governments to translate into concrete action their commitment to eliminate child labour and to implement, inter alia, national action plans for that purpose.

II. UNICEF

The UNICEF report State of the World's Children 1997 was launched on 11 December 1996. It includes a chapter on the Convention and on its implementation process. It explains the activities of the Committee as a treaty monitoring body, and stresses the importance of information and awareness campaigns on children's rights, as well as of the training of professional groups. It also emphasizes the need for international cooperation and assistance programmes in favour of children.

The report focuses mainly on the theme of hazardous and exploitative forms of child labour, which should be eliminated urgently. It recognizes that child labour happens in poor and rich countries, in all kinds of activities and not only in export industries (it would suffice to think about advertising and sports activities, domestic service and agriculture). Child labour should be eliminated by the adoption of an effective strategy which should be implemented immediately and not be dependent on the eradication of poverty.

The report proposes the adoption of some decisive steps, such as:

(a) Compulsory, free and universal primary education for all children;

(b) Birth registration for all children;

(c) An effective legal protection in the light of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the relevant ILO conventions;

(d) A system of data collection and monitoring of situations of child labour to ensure visibility and effective protection.

The report further encourages the adoption of codes of conduct by corporations and industries in order not to employ children or promote the trade of goods produced by them.

III. ILO

ILO also launched an important report on the most intolerable forms of child labour, "Targeting the intolerable". In this text, it calls on States and organizations to put people at the centre of development and to uphold respect for human rights as a unifying principle among all nations. It recalls the negative effects of child labour on children, including on their health, education and development.

It recognizes, however, that there are reasons to hope. In fact, there is an increasing worldwide movement against child labour. Governments recognize that it is a problem that should be tackled and that it is contrary to children's rights. Corporations like Reebock, Sears and Levi Strauss are now concerned about the possible use of child labour in producing sports goods, and they are showing an interest and a commitment to certifying that their products are not a result of child labour.

The report stresses the unknown, although immense, dimension of child labour in the world, including in hazardous activities, domestic service, prostitution, bonded labour, etc. It proposes that:

(a) Resources be allocated with priority for the most intolerable forms of child labour (bondage, prostitution, slavery-like activities, work in hazardous activities);

(b) Working children be visible and their rights protected, including by making a survey of the existing situation;

(c) A new convention forbidding the extreme forms of child labour should be adopted, a movement that is already under way within ILO, and which will take into consideration the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Committee is in fact involved in this exercise and its comments and suggestions have been already sought;

(d) A national programme of action to combat child labour be developed and a national authority identified to act as a focal point in this area.

It is interesting to note the coincidence of approaches of the General Assembly resolution and the UNICEF and ILO reports, particularly in the light of the recommendations made by the Committee following its thematic discussion on the economic exploitation of children.

IV. TREATY BODIES

The Human Rights Committee adopted in 1996 an important General Comment on article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (General Comment No. 25 (57)), some elements of which deserve special mention:

(a) The right to vote in elections and referenda must be established by law and cannot be subject to unreasonable restrictions, for instance on the grounds of physical disability, level of education or ownership of property;

(b) Lack of a residence, for instance by homeless persons, should not limit the right to vote;

(c) Information materials on the voting process should be made widely available, including in minority languages.

The General Comment of the Human Rights Committee may have a direct impact on the realization of children's rights. Consider, for example, the following three situations:

(a) The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child has led to the organization of elections by children on the rights of the child. This has happened, for instance, in different Latin American and some African countries. In some of them, war or civil strife have prevented national elections from taking place. But children's elections have allowed adults to learn the processes of voting, setting up and strengthening democratic institutions;

(b) Children who are not yet old enough to vote in political elections but who have elected representatives to school or local councils, have had an enlightening and learning experience of democratic participation in voting processes;

(c) Some countries are lowering the age for political rights, including participation in national elections. In those cases where voting rights apply to persons below 18, this General Comment becomes of decisive importance.

V. MEETINGS

In October, the Committee was represented by Mr. Kolosov and Mrs. Santos Pais in a meeting held in Bern on the Convention to encourage the ratification of the Convention by Switzerland. The question of reservations to the Convention was addressed and encouragement given for the Convention to be ratified without resorting to reservations.

A training course for government officials on reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child was held at the ILO Training Centre, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, for government officials responsible for the preparation of national reports on the implementation of the Convention.

VI. IMPORTANT DECISIONS IN THE FIELD OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The European Parliament adopted two important resolutions on children in December 1996, both inspired by the Convention. The first was on the improvement of legislation and of cooperation between member States of the European Union on the adoption of children. The text encouraged, inter alia, the ratification of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption and stressed that adoption was a means of protecting the rights of children, rather than those of adults, an approach the Committee often emphasized in its dialogues with State parties.

The second focused on measures to protect children who are recognized as increasingly being the victims of socio-economic problems, particularly when they belong to single-parent families. The text also stressed that the formulation and implementation of policies aimed at protecting children's rights should prevail over budgetary considerations. It emphasized the importance of the right of the child to participation, i.e. having a say in decisions affecting the child's life. It recommended the urgent adoption of measures to combat child sex tourism, child pornography and sexual abuse of children. It further stressed that young offenders under 16 should not be in prison and should be provided education and reintegration. It recommended that independent institutions, such as an Ombudsperson, should impartially and efficiently supervise compliance with and respect for children's rights. Finally, it stressed that parents, children and professionals should be educated on the rights of the child and on their roles so as to enable children to exercise their rights.

These two texts illustrate the worldwide concern for children and their increasing importance on the political agenda, including at the regional level.

Annex V

BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
THIRD ACTIVITY REPORT

(beginning 22 May 1995)

1. Sessions and pre-sessional working groups:

Ninth session	22 May - 9 June 1995
Pre-sessional working group	12-16 June 1995
Tenth session	30 October - 17 November 1995
Pre-sessional working group	20-24 November 1995
Eleventh session	8-26 January 1996
Pre-sessional working group	29 January - 2 February 1996
Twelfth session	20 May - 7 June 1996
Pre-sessional working group	10-14 June 1996
Thirteenth session	23 September - 11 October 1996
Pre-sessional working group	14-18 October 1996
Fourteenth session	6-24 January 1997

2. Adoption of session reports - six reports

3. Adoption of biennial reports to the General Assembly - one report

4. Consideration of States parties' reports - 36 reports

5. Public meetings held - approximately 140

6. Private meetings held - approximately 94

7. Participation in United Nations conferences:

Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo and Mrs. Flora Eufemio.

United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, Turkey, 3-14 June 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

8. Participation in expert meetings:

Meeting of experts on the development of guidelines for the incorporation of a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations human rights regime, Geneva, 3-7 July 1995
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Expert group meeting on the right to adequate housing, Geneva, 18-19 January 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Second session of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights on a draft optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, Geneva, 15-26 January 1996
Mrs. Marta Santos Pais and Mr. Youri Kolosov.

Second session of the open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate guidelines for a possible draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Geneva, 29 January - 9 February 1996
Mrs. Marta Santos Pais, Mr. Youri Kolosov.

UN/UNICEF Panel on the Convention on the Rights of the Child - the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: the links, New York, 13 March 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Round table on Approaches of Human Rights Treaty Bodies towards Women's Health, with a Focus on Reproductive and Sexual Health Rights, New York, 9-11 December 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo and Mrs. Hoda Badran.

Third session of the working group on a draft optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, Geneva, 20-31 January 1997
Mrs. Marta Santos Pais and Mr. Youri Kolosov.

9. Participation in regional and international meetings:

Arab regional preparatory meeting for Habitat II, Cairo, 1996
Mrs. Hoda Badran

Consultation on the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Geneva, 25-26 January 1995
Mrs. Judith Karp, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Ms. Sandra Mason, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

Regional consultation on the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children for the Arab region
Mrs. Hoda Badran and Mr. Thomas Hammarberg.

Training programme organized by Asianet on "Aids and Child Rights - The Impact on the Asia-Pacific Region", Bangkok, 21-26 November 1995
Mr. Swithun Mombeshora.

Meeting of the Mediterranean Group on Education for Development: the role of women for the new generations, Catania, Italy, 25-28 April 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Regional training for UNICEF staff, government representatives and non-governmental organizations on the Convention, Tunis, 1996
Mrs. Hoda Badran

Consultation on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Syrian Arab Republic, 1996

International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1995
Mrs. Hoda Badran

The rights of the children of indigenous populations, Canada
Mrs. Hoda Badran and Mrs. Judith Karp

Regional consultation on children in armed conflict, 1995
Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Mrs. Hoda Badran

Preparatory Inter-American meeting for the World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Brazilia, 14-20 April 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Meeting of high-level governmental experts from the African region on the ratification of international human rights treaties, organized by the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights with assistance from the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 14-17 May 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo.

Regional seminar on the rights of the child on the eve of the twenty-first century, organized by the Spanish Committee for UNICEF, Salamanca, Spain, 2-4 May 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mrs. Hoda Badran and Mr. Thomas Hammarberg.

European Conference on Street Children Worldwide, Amsterdam, 21-23 June 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media, Manila, 2-5 July 1996
Mrs. Flora C. Eufemio.

International forum on the rights of the child, organized by the French Foundation for Childhood and UNESCO, Paris, 27 November 1995
Mr. Thomas Hammarberg and Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

International Seminar on Current Social Trends and Their Implications for Policing: the Situation of Juveniles, Munster, Germany, 5-7 February 1996
Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg.

Regional consultation on reporting and monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Asia, organized by Asianet, Brunei Darussalam, 4-8 November 1996
Mrs. Flora C. Eufemio and Ms. Sandra Mason.

Informal tripartite meeting at the ministerial level on prevention and elimination of child labour, organized by ILO, Geneva, 12 June 1996
Mrs. Flora Eufemio.

Afro-Asian meeting on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, Cairo, 1996
Mrs. Hoda Badran.

10. Organization of general discussion days:

"The administration of juvenile justice", 13 November 1995
Mrs. Marta Santos Pais, Ms. Sandra Mason, Mrs. Judith Karp: drafting of outline
Ms. Sandra Mason: introductory statement
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo: chair.

"The child and the media", 7 October 1996
Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, General Rapporteur
Ms. Sandra Mason, Mr. Youri Kolosov and Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg: chairing of three panels.
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo: chairing of the plenary.

11. Informal regional meetings (organized by UNICEF):

Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka: 2-16 October 1995

Regional consultation on child labour, Kathmandu

Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mrs. Flora Eufemio, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Mr. Youri Kolosov, Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais, Mrs. Hoda Badran, Mrs. Judith Karp, Ms. Sandra Mason.

Morocco-Egypt November 1996

Consultation on the rights of women and girls, Cairo

Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg, Mrs. Flora Eufemio, Mrs. Judith Karp, Mr. Youri Kolosov, Mrs. Hoda Badran, Ms. Sandra Mason.

12. Participation in technical assistance programmes (High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights):

Viet Nam, March 1996, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais
Togo, 1996, Mrs. Akila Belembaogo
Torino, Italy, November 1996, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

13. Official invitations to national meetings:

National Congress on the Rights of the Child, Tunis, 11 January 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mr. Youri Kolosov.

14. Press conferences:

Six in Geneva (the Chairperson and/or designated members)
One in New York (the Chairpersons of CRC and CEDAW)

15. Specific programmes:

Plan of Action to strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child prepared by the High Commissioner for Human Rights

International study on the impact of armed conflict on children recommended by the Committee
Advisers: Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

Database on the rights of the child produced by the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights

16. Specific document:

General guidelines regarding the form and contents of periodic reports to be submitted by States parties under article 44, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention

17. Meetings of the treaty bodies and non-conventional organs:

Sixth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, Geneva, 18-22 September 1995
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo.

Third annual meeting of special rapporteurs and other experts, Geneva, 28-30 May 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg (in his capacity as Special Representative for human rights in Cambodia).

Seventh meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, Geneva, 16-20 September 1996
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo.

18. Annual meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies with Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, New York, 1-9 June 1995
Mrs. Akila Belembaogo.

19. Personalities met by Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, in her capacity as Chairperson of the Committee and in the course of her participation in various meetings:

Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund
The Deputy-Director of the International Labour Organization
H.M. the Queen of Spain

Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund
Presidents of Mali, Eritrea and Togo
First Lady of Egypt
Prime Ministers of Togo and Ethiopia
Chairperson, Spanish Committee for UNICEF
Ministers from various ministries from Bangladesh, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Sweden and Togo
Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Office at Geneva from Canada, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sweden and Tunisia
Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity.

The Bureau:

Chairperson: Mrs. Akila Belembaogo
Vice-Chairpersons: Mrs. Flora Eufemio, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg
Rapporteur: Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

Annex VI

LIST OF INITIAL REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 24 JANUARY 1997

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Third session (January 1993)		
Bolivia	CRC/C/3/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.1
Sweden	CRC/C/3/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.2
Viet Nam	CRC/C/3/Add.4 and 21	CRC/C/15/Add.3
Russian Federation	CRC/C/3/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.4
Egypt	CRC/C/3/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.5
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.6 (preliminary)
Fourth session (September-October 1993)		
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.7 (preliminary)
Peru	CRC/C/3/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.8
El Salvador	CRC/C/3/Add.9 and 28	CRC/C/15/Add.9
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3 and 20	CRC/C/15/Add.10
Costa Rica	CRC/C/3/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.11
Rwanda	CRC/C/8/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.12 (preliminary)
Fifth session (January 1994)		
Mexico	CRC/C/3/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.13
Namibia	CRC/C/3/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.14
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.15 (preliminary)
Romania	CRC/C/3/Add.16	CRC/C/15/Add.16
Belarus	CRC/C/3/Add.14	CRC/C/15/Add.17
Sixth session (April 1994)		
Pakistan	CRC/C/3/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.18
Burkina Faso	CRC/C/3/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.19
France	CRC/C/3/Add.15	CRC/C/15/Add.20
Jordan	CRC/C/8/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.21
Chile	CRC/C/3/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.22
Norway	CRC/C/8/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.23

	States party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Seventh session (September-October 1994)		
Honduras	CRC/C/3/Add.17	CRC/C/15/Add.24
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10 and 26	CRC/C/15/Add.25
Madagascar	CRC/C/8/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.26
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.27 (preliminary)
Spain	CRC/C/8/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.28
Argentina	CRC/C/8/Add.2 and 17	CRC/C/15/Add.35 (adopted at the eighth session)
Eighth session (January 1995)		
Philippines	CRC/C/3/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.29
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.30
Poland	CRC/C/8/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.31
Jamaica	CRC/C/8/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.32
Denmark	CRC/C/3/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.33
United Kingdom	CRC/C/11/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.34
Ninth session (May-June 1995)		
Nicaragua	CRC/C/3/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.36
Canada	CRC/C/11/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.37
Belgium	CRC/C/11/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.38
Tunisia	CRC/C/11/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.39
Sri Lanka	CRC/C/8/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.40
Tenth session (October-November 1995)		
Italy	CRC/C/8/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.41
Ukraine	CRC/C/8/Add.10/Rev.1	CRC/C/15/Add.42
Germany	CRC/C/11/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.43
Senegal	CRC/C/3/Add.31	CRC/C/15/Add.44
Portugal	CRC/C/3/Add.30	CRC/C/15/Add.45
Holy See	CRC/C/3/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.46

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Eleventh session (January 1996)		
Yemen	CRC/C/8/Add.20	CRC/C/15/Add.47
Mongolia	CRC/C/3/Add.32	CRC/C/15/Add.48
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.49
Iceland	CRC/C/11/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.50
Republic of Korea	CRC/C/8/Add.21	CRC/C/15/Add.51
Croatia	CRC/C/8/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.52
Finland	CRC/C/8/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.53
Twelfth session (May-June 1996)		
Lebanon	CRC/C/18/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.54
Zimbabwe	CRC/C/3/Add.35	CRC/C/15/Add.55
China	CRC/C/11/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.56
Nepal	CRC/C/3/Add.34	CRC/C/15/Add.57
Guatemala	CRC/C/3/Add.33	CRC/C/15/Add.58
Cyprus	CRC/C/8/Add.24	CRC/C/15/Add.59
Thirteenth session (September-October 1996)		
Morocco	CRC/C/28/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.60
Nigeria	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.61
Uruguay	CRC/C/3/Add.37	CRC/C/15/Add.62
United Kingdom (Hong Kong)	CRC/C/11/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.63
Mauritius	CRC/C/3/Add.36	CRC/C/15/Add.64
Slovenia	CRC/C/8/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.65
Fourteenth session (January 1997)		
Ethiopia	CRC/C/8/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.66
Myanmar	CRC/C/8/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.67
Panama	CRC/C/8/Add.28	CRC/C/15/Add.68
Syrian Arab Republic	CRC/C/28/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.69
New Zealand	CRC/C/28/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.70
Bulgaria	CRC/C/8/Add.29	CRC/C/15/Add.71

Annex VII

PROVISIONAL LIST OF INITIAL REPORTS SCHEDULED FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE COMMITTEE'S FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH SESSIONS

Fifteenth session
(20 May-6 June 1997)

Cuba	CRC/C/8/Add.30
Azerbaijan	CRC/C/11/Add.8
Bangladesh	CRC/C/3/Add.38
Algeria	CRC/C/28/Add.4
Ghana	CRC/C/3/Add.39
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.42

Sixteenth session
(22 September-10 October 1997)

Australia	CRC/C/8/Add.31
Lao People's Democratic Republic	CRC/C/8/Add.32
Uganda	CRC/C/3/Add.40
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	CRC/C/3/Add.41
Trinidad and Tobago	CRC/C/11/Add.10
Togo	CRC/C/3/Add.42

Annex VIII

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED FOR THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

CRC/C/2/Rev.5	Reservations, declarations and objections relating to the Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC/C/8/Add.9	Initial report of Myanmar
CRC/C/8/Add.27	Initial report of Ethiopia
CRC/C/8/Add.28	Initial report of Panama
CRC/C/8/Add.29	Initial report of Bulgaria
CRC/C/15/Add.66	Concluding observations: Ethiopia
CRC/C/15/Add.67	Concluding observations: Myanmar
CRC/C/15/Add.68	Concluding observations: Panama
CRC/C/15/Add.69	Concluding observations: Syrian Arab Republic
CRC/C/15/Add.70	Concluding observations: New Zealand
CRC/C/15/Add.71	Concluding observations: Bulgaria
CRC/C/27/Rev.7	Note by the Secretary-General on follow-up to the consideration of reports
CRC/C/28/Add.2	Initial report of the Syrian Arab Republic
CRC/C/28/Add.3	Initial report of New Zealand
CRC/C/40/Rev.5	Note by the Secretary-General on areas identified by the Committee for technical assistance
CRC/C/59	Provisional agenda and annotations
CRC/C/60	Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports
CRC/C/61	Note by the Secretary-General on initial reports due in 1998
CRC/C/SR.344-371	Summary records of the fourteenth session